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HREE LIVE GHOSTS

FREDERICK S ISHAM

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Three Live Ghosts

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

BY

FREDERICK S. ISHAM

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The following is a copy of the original playbill of the first performance of "Three Live Ghosts" at the Greenwich Village Theatre, New York City, September 29th, 1920.

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1922

MAX MARCIN

Presents

THREE LIVE GHOSTS

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

BY

FREDERICK S. ISHAM

(From the novel of the same name by Frederick S. Isham published by Bobbs-Merrill Company)

THE PLAYERS

(In the order of their first appearance.)

MRS. GUBBINS. *known as "Old Sweetheart*..... *Beryl Mercer*
PEGGY WOOFERS .....*Beatrice Miller*
BOLTON, *of the American Detective Agency*..... *Emmett Shackelford*
JIMMIE GIBBONS .....*Charles McNaughton*
WILLIAM FOSTER, *alias "William Jones"*..... *Percy Helton*
SPOOFY .....*Cyril Chadwick*
ROSE GORDON .....*Flora Sheffield*
BRIGGS, *of Scotland Yard*.....*Charles Dalton*
BENSON .....*Arthur Metcalf*
LADY LEICESTER ..... *Mercedes Desmore*

THE SCENES

ACT I—*Home of "Old Sweetheart."*
ACT II—*The same the following morning.*
ACT III—*The same a few minutes later.*
Place: London, 1917.

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CAST

(In the order in which they appear.)

MRS. GUBBINS. known as "old sweetheart."
MISS WOOFERS.
BOLTON, of the American Detective Agency.
JIMMIE GUBBINS.
WILLIAM FOSTER, alias, William Jones.
SPOOFY.
ROSE GORDON.
BRIGGS, of Scotland Yard.
BENSON.
LADY LEICESTER.
TWO POLICEMEN.

Three Live Ghosts

ACT ONE

SCENE: *The action of all three acts takes place in the combination sitting and dining room in the house of* MRS. GUBBINS, *known as "Old Sweetheart," in the poorer quarters of London. The room is sparsely furnished and contains a shabby dining table, an open cupboard with packages, etc., several dilapidated chairs and a mantel with a wheezy old clock and several cheap ornaments. An air of squalor and drink permeates the place. There is a door up stage,* L., *opening into kitchen. Door down stage* L., *opening into bedroom; door,* R.C. *opening into hall. Across hall can be seen stairway. Double doors down stage* R. *opening into bedroom. Practical bay window* L.C. *back, looking into street.*

TIME: *The summer of* 1917.

PLACE: *London.*

DISCOVERED: OLD SWEETHEART *and* MISS WOOFERS *at table,* OLD SWEETHEART *right,* MISS WOOFERS *left. Their hands are on table, their fingers touching as at a spiritual seance. The kitchen door and door* R. *open. Slow curtain.*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(She looks up and calls)*

Jimmie Gubbins, your stepmother is callin' to you—your sweetheart is wytin' to 'ear from you. Jimmie Gubbins, where are you? *(Very brief pause.)*

MISS WOOFERS. The spirits don't seem to be very accommodatin' to-day.

OLD SWEETHEART. Sometimes they are verry obsinate and you got to coax 'em. I'll try again. *(She looks up and smiles.)* Jimmie Gubbins, don't you 'ear me callin' you? Wot's the matter with you to-day? *(Hurdy-gurdy plays off stage.)* Good 'eavens, 'e'll keep that up all day, maybe if I throw in a penny 'e'll go away. *(She rises, goes to window at back and throws penny. Hurdy-gurdy stops.* OLD SWEETHEART *goes down to table, sits, with tips of fingers again touching* MISS WOOFERS'.*)* Now that the concert is over, maybe his spirit will answer. I'll try again. Jimmie Gubbins, where are you?

MISS WOOFERS. Mybe his spirits is here and we don't know it.

OLD SWEETHEART. Let's try asking him a question. You ask.

MISS WOOFERS. I don't know what to ask him.

OLD SWEETHEART. Ask 'im if 'e's 'appy over there.

MISS WOOFERS. Jimmy, are you 'appy over there? *(Three ghostly raps outside* R.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. That means "Yes."

MISS WOOFERS. Was it really 'is spirit?

OLD SWEETHEART. I can feel 'im near me—verry near. Ask him another question.

MISS WOOFERS. What'll I ask 'im now?

OLD SWEETHEART. I 'ave 'eard that wot you liked over here you gets over there. Now, wot did Jimmie like most?

MISS WOOFERS. He always liked his beer.

OLD SWEETHEART. Jimmie Gubbins, does you still

get your beer? *(Three raps at door* R.*)* He gets it. That's verry consoling.

MISS WOOFERS. Sounded to me like sombody at the door.

OLD SWEETHEART. You go.

MISS WOOFERS. *(Goes towards door, frightened, then to back of table)* It's your door.

OLD SWEETHEART. Oh, verry well.

*(*OLD SWEETHEART *goes to door, cautiously opens it.* BOLTON *is revealed just outside of door. Has newspaper in pocket with picture of* BILL. *As* BOLTON *slowly enters, closes door, the two women move away, frightened.* OLD SWEETHEART *to front of table,* R., *end.)*

BOLTON. Mrs. Gubbins——?

OLD. SWEETHEART. Yes——

BOLTON. *(Coming down)* The landlady told me I'd find you here.

OLD SWEETHEART. You 'as. 'Ighly honored—gentleman from the city, I tyke it?

BOLTON. May I speak with you alone? *(Looks hard at* MISS WOOFERS.*)*

MISS WOOFERS. All right. *(Exits* C.D. R. *Closes door.)*

BOLTON. My name is Bolton, of the American Detective Agency.

OLD SWEETHEART. Oh, a detective?

BOLTON. Yes.

OLD SWEETHEART. Won't you sit down?

BOLTON. Thanks. *(He sits, chair* R.*)* Mrs. Gubbins, I came to speak to you of your son.

OLD SWEETHEART. Yes?

BOLTON. He is dead, I believe?

OLD SWEETHEART. He is—I believe.

BOLTON. Aren't you positive?

OLD SWEETHEART. Verry positive.

BOLTON. What makes you so positive that he's dead.

OLD SWEETHEART. 'Aven't I collected the life insurance?

BOLTON. He was reported killed in action, wasn't he?

OLD SWEETHEART. 'e died a 'ero—a martyr to 'is country—'e died a bryve soldier and the wye the government doles out the insurance money you'd think 'e died as a favor to me. But wot might be your business with my Jimmie? *(Goes to chair* L. *of table, sits.)*

BOLTON. *(Goes to front of table)* It doesn't concern him, but another. I am looking for an American, Foster by name, whom I hoped to trace through your son.

OLD SWEETHEART. Why through 'im?

BOLTON. Because I have reasons to believe he enlisted in your son's regiment. You see, this Foster left New York in rather a hurry.

OLD SWEETHEART. They sometimes does leave New York in a hurry.

BOLTON. I believe he enlisted under the name of William Jones. I was hoping your son might have mentioned William Jones in one of his letters.

OLD SWEETHEART. Never heard the nyme before!

BOLTON. I have found an American or two, named Jones, but they were not the Jones I wanted!

OLD SWEETHEART. There are a lot of Joneses! Very clever of 'im I call it, if 'e wanted to hide, tyking that nyme.

BOLTON. *(Looks about, crosses to* L. *Sees photo of* JIM *on mantel)* This your son? *(Compares with picture in paper.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Yes, that's my boy——

BOLTON. *(Crosses to* OLD SWEETHEART. *Shows her paper)* There's a picture of the young man I want to find.

OLD SWEETHEART. Oh! Ayn't 'e 'andsome? Wot's it sye?

BOLTON. *(Reads)* "Wanted: Information as to whereabouts of William Foster, of New York City. Believed to have enlisted in London, January, 1915, under the name of William Jones. *(Glancing at* OLD SWEETHEART.*)*—1000 pounds reward will be paid for said information."

OLD SWEETHEART. 1000 pounds? *(Sighs.)*

BOLTON. *(Glancing at* JIM'S *picture, going back of table)* Now, Mrs. Gubbins, I want you to look among your son's papers if you have any, and see if you can help us trace this man Foster—*(Puts paper on table.)*—or Jones, as he calls himself. It would pay you well if you could.

OLD SWEETHEART. I'll do my verry best. And if I should find 'im—shall I let them know it at Scotland Yard?

BOLTON. No, no, you'd better let me know personally. You see, they know of the reward at Scotland Yard and might claim it.

OLD SWEETHEART. Then I shan't 'ave anything to do with Scotland Yard. Wot did you sye your name was?

BOLTON. Bolton. And should you forget it—you'll find it—*(Picks up paper.)*—in the newspaper. The address too. *(Puts paper down. Impressively.)* One thousand pounds reward! Good day, Mrs. Bubbins. *(Going to* C.D. R.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Good day. *(*BOLTON *exits, closes door.)* One thousand pounds, one thousand pounds, one thousand quid—— *(Rises, goes to closet,* R., *takes out bottle of gin, glass and deck of old cards—goes to table, pours out drink, spreads*

out cards, three piles, three at a time, telling fortune.) To me 'ouse, to me friends, to myself, to myself. *(Drinks.)* One thousand pounds— *(Looks at first pile.)* Spades, I 'ate spades. *(Looks at other piles, they are diamonds.)* King of diamonds, that's better—oh! Something's going to happen, something very lucky for me. *(Pours drink.* MISS WOOFERS *knocks.* OLD SWEETHEART *drinks quickly, goes to closet.)* Somebody may want a drink. *(Putting back bottle and glass.)* Come in—— *(Enter* MISS WOOFERS.*)*

MISS WOOFERS. I see the gent's gone. Wot did he want? *(Goes to back of table, picks up paper.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Crosses to table)* Nothing —nothing, leave that paper alone. *(Takes cards.)*

MISS WOOFERS. Is there anything particular in the pyper?

OLD SWEETHEART. Nothing particular at all. *(Takes paper.)* I'm savin' it for wrapping something in. *(Crosses to closet and puts paper and cards in it.)* Never can tell when an old newspyper'll come in 'andy.

MISS WOOFERS. You been telling your fortune, I see. Did you learn anything from the cards?

OLD SWEETHEART. I'm to fall an heiress to a thousand pounds.

MISS WOOFERS. More life insurance? *(Moves to end of table.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Goes to* R. *of table)* 'ardly. I only 'ad one step-son to give to my king and country.

MISS WOOFERS. Shall we try for more messages from Jimmie?

OLD SWEETHEART. Yes—I got a very important question to arsk 'im. *(They sit as before, the tips of their fingers touching. She looks up and calls.)*

Jimmie Gubbins—you still hoverin' near? Jimmy Gubbins, where the hell are you?

JIMMIE. *(Voice off stage* Old Sweetheart! Old Sweetheart!

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Rises)* Dear Gawd!

MISS WOOFERS. *(Rises)* His voice!

JIMMIE. *(Off stage)* Peggy, Peggy!

MISS WOOFERS. *(Frightened)* He's callin' to me.

(Enter JIMMIE C. OLD SWEETHEART *and* MISS WOOFERS *are scared.* MISS WOOFERS *gasps of surprise and fear.)*

JIMMY. Old Sweetheart! 'ello! I sye, 'ello! *(Coming down* R.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Timidly)* 'Ello.

JIMMIE. Wot's the matter? Ayn't you glad to see me?

OLD SWEETHEART. Verry glad.

MISS WOOFERS. Ayn't he life-like?

OLD SWEETHEART. For a spirit.

MISS WOOFERS. Syme voice.

OLD SWEETHEART. Syme face.

JIMMIE. And the syme Jimmy! *(Seizes* OLD SWEETHEART *in his arms. Gets whiff of gin and makes wry face.)* And the syme smell—gin. *(Kisses her, turns to* MISS WOOFERS.*)* Come 'ere, Peg!

MISS WOOFERS. *(Backing away)* No—no——

JIMMIE. Wot's the matter with you? Come 'ere! *(Takes* MISS WOOFERS *in his arms.)*

MISS WOOFERS. It feels like him.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Crosses to him, puts hands on him)* Then it is 'im. 'E ayn't dead—'E's come back—Jimmie—Jimmie—— *(Takes him in her arms with genuine affection.)*

JIMMIE. *(After* OLD SWEETHEART *releases him)*

Yes, here we are, all merry and bright and everything. Why, Mother, you're looking fine. As usual, soused—— *(Crosses to* R.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Drowin' of my troubles, darling. But where 'ave you been? *(Moving to* R. *end of table.)*

JIMMIE. Prisoner.

OLD SWEETHEART. All this time?

JIMMIE. Yes, worse luck!

OLD SWEETHEART. How was you took?

JIMMIE. Gassed. Surrendered when I didn't know it. When I came to I was in a prison camp. *(Hangs hat on rack.)*

MISS WOOFERS. But the government reported you as dead.

JIMMIE. That's wot the sergeant said! *(Coming down* R.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. The sergeant——?

JIMMIE. *(Goes to chair* R.*)* Yes. When I went back to report after having been prisoner a year in Germany.

MISS WOOFERS. *(Sits chair* L. *of table)* Ayn't that awful! Wot did the sergeant do when you told 'im?

JIMMIE. Was I received with open arms—as a 'ero?

OLD SWEETHEART. Wasn't you?

JIMMIE. Yes, I was—*not!*

MISS WOOFERS. Wot 'appened?

JIMMIE. *(Sit chair* R.*)* "I've come back to report" says I. "Me wot went over the top and was took prisoner." "Prisoner is it?" says 'e. "No, prisoner it *was*." "You ain't escaped. You never *was* took prisoner."

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Soothingly)* Only 'is bit of fun!

JIMMIE. Fun, was it? "I've come back for my

back pay," says I. "Back pay? There ayn't none. Besides," he said, "you ayn't got no mortal 'ands to tyke it with."

OLD SWEETHEART. Maybe 'e was right, Jimmie. Maybe you are dead and you don't know it.

JIMMIE. That's wot 'e said. "Government reports you dead." And, "dead you are—— *(Rises, goes up stage, a little.)* "You're under the ground, a-pushin' up the daisies." Me, a daisy pusher—I'd like to push 'im in the eye.

OLD SWEETHEART. That wouldn't do no good.

JIMMIE. Wyte till I come back to life. *(*OLD SWEETHEART *looks at* JIMMY.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. You *can't* come back to life.

JIMMIE. Wy not?

OLD SWEETHEART. You'd be gettin' me into trouble.

JIMMIE. Trouble? How?

OLD SWEETHEART. You got to stye dead. If you love me, stye dead, Jimmie. Please stye dead.

JIMMIE. *(Crosses to* OLD SWEETHEART*)* You know me, mother. I'm willing to be accommodatin', but wot's it all about?

OLD SWEETHEART. I've been spendin' the life insurance.

JIMMIE. You mean you've collected on me?

OLD SWEETHEART. You never can collect life insurance too quickly, Jimmie.

JIMMIE. 'Ave you got all of it?

OLD SWEETHEART. Government wouldn't give it all up at once. There's another installment coming and you got to stye dead if I'm to get it.

JIMMIE. *(Crosses to back of chair* R. *Laughing.)* It would be a shyme to let the government rob you of my life insurance, wouldn't it?

OLD SWEETHEART. An' arter I've been looking forward to collectin' the next installment!

JIMMIE. Yes, but wot about my back pay?

OLD SWEETHEART. You can come to life when the h'insurance is spent and draw your back pay. And do the government wot tried to do you.

JIMMIE. *(Crosses to* OLD SWEETHEART*)* You do get ideas, don't you? But do I help spend the insurance?

OLD SWEETHEART. We'll see. *(*JIM *looks in purse.)* I'll see. 'Ere's a shillin'. *(Takes coin from her purse and hands it to him.)*

JIMMIE. *(Takes coin)* Oh, Blyme, can you spare it? *(Spits on coin, throws it up and catches it.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. It ayn't any good for you to have too much money. You might spend it on liquor—— *(*JIM *crosses* R.*)* Which reminds me— *(Rises, going to* C. *door* R. MISS WOOFERS *rises; goes to front of table.)*

JIMMIE. Time for a drink, eh?

OLD SWEETHEART. I 'as a little errand. *(At door.)*

JIMMIE. Make it a long one.

OLD SWEETHEART. I'll take my time. *(Looks knowingly at* JIMMIE *and* PEG. *Exit* OLD SWEETHEART, *closes door.)*

MISS WOOFERS. *(Stands in a posture of confused bashfulness)* Ayn't you got something nice to sye to me?

JIMMIE. *(Eyeing her appraisingly; going to her)* Ayn't you been putting on flesh?

MISS WOOFERS. Maybe a little bit, Jimmie.

JIMMIE. Ain't you been worryin' about me?

MISS WOOFERS. I've thought of you every minute.

JIMMIE. Thinking so hard, you took on flesh.

MISS WOOFERS. I can't 'elp it, Jimmie.

JIMMIE. Who you been keepin' company with?

MISS WOOFERS. They ayn't been no one, Jimmie! You arsk me!

JIMMIE. *(Sternly)* Attention! *(She straightens with a look of awe.)* Salute! *(She does.* JIMMIE *grabs her.)*

MISS WOOFERS. Oh, Jimmie, don't 'ug so 'ard!

JIMMIE. *(Putting her out at arms' length)* It's all right. You ain't been practisin'. Give me a kiss. *(She responds with maiden bashfulness—a little peck.* JIMMIE *surveys her.)* You 'aven't *improved* at all. *(Goes little to* R.*)*

MISS WOOFERS. Wot you mean, Jimmie?

JIMMIE. *(Loftily)* In the h'art of h'osculation!

MISS WOOFERS. *(Anxiously)* Oh, Jimmie, don't you like my kisses?

JIMMIE. *(Goes to her)* You call that kissin'? That's peckin'. A regular kiss ayn't too short, and it ayn't too long. It's sort of *lingerin'! (Dreamily.)*

MISS WOOFERS. *(Anxiously)* 'Ow do you know?

JIMMIE. Eh?

MISS WOOFERS. You ayn't been practisin', 'ave you?

JIMMIE. *(Hastily)* Me?

MISS WOOFERS. On those French lydies?

JIMMIE. How could I? I don't even know the language!

MISS WOOFERS. *(Apparently re-assured)* That's so! *(They embrace.)*

(Enter WILLIAM FOSTER, *alias* WILLIAM JONES, *an American, followed by* "SPOOFY." *The latter is an Englishman suffering from shell-shock. Both look starved and seedy.* SPOOFY'S *pants are rather short. The American's* (BILL) *manner is somewhat subdued.)*

BILL. Hello, Jimmie. *(Leaves door open, coming down* R.*)*

JIMMIE. 'Lo, Bill. *(*BILL *down* R. *He sees* MISS WOOFERS *in* JIM'S *arms.)*

BILL. Beg pardon——

JIMMIE. *(To* BILL*)* It's all right, it's all right. This is me gal. Me regular gal—w'en at home. *(Introducing* MISS WOOFERS.*)* Peg, this is me American pal, Bill, Miss Peggy Woofers.

MISS WOOFERS. It's an honor—— *(*BILL *crosses to* PEGGY, *shakes hands.)*

BILL. Glad to know you, Miss Woofers.

JIMMIE. *(Indicating* SPOOFY, *who has been wandering down* R. *looking at room)* This is my other pal! "Spoofy," we calls him, because 'e ayn't any brynes!

MISS WOOFERS. W'ot a sad affliction! *(Gazing at* SPOOFY.*)*

SPOOFY. *(Gazing about)* Wot a beautiful room. Rather short of bric-a-brac, though! *(All turn looking at room.)*

MISS WOOFERS. Does the poor man like bric-a-brac? *(Sympathetically.* SPOOFY *wanders up to cupboard.)*

JIMMIE. *(Hastily)* Yes; bric-a-brac and other things! But don't mind him. He ayn't exactly crazy, only bug-'ouse—sufferin' from shell-shock!

MISS WOOFERS. *(Crosses to* JIMMIE*)* Shell-shock—Is 'e dangerous?

JIMMIE. Not at all! He 'as one or two—harmless little 'abits—that's all! *(*SPOOFY *opens cupboard, takes out salt cellar, puts in pocket.)*

MISS WOOFERS. Oh! *(*SPOOFY *comes down* R. *stands looking out door* R.*)* Wot did you sye 'is name was?

JIMMIE. I don't know.

MISS WOOFERS. Who is 'e?

"THREE LIVE GHOSTS."

JIMMIE. That's it—who the 'ell is 'e?

MISS WOOFERS. Don't you know?

JIMMIE. I don't and 'e don't. *(*MISS WOOFERS *turns to* BILL.*)*

BILL. We found him in a prison camp.

MISS WOOFERS. Prison camp? *(Crosses* BILL *to fireplace.)*

JIMMIE. He sort of annexed himself.

MISS WOOFERS. *(Quickly)* Well, I think I'll go and 'elp ma! I'm learning 'ow to cook. *(*MISS WOOFERS *crosses to* L. *round to* C. *door* R.*)*

JIMMIE. *(Goes to* C. *door* R. *With enthusiasm)* Wait a minute! Give us another kiss before you go.

MISS WOOFERS. Before gentlemen? Oh, Jimmie Gubbins! *(Bashfully, exits* C. *door* R. JIMMIE *goes into hall with her, hear kissing, then he returns; closes door.*

BILL. *(Crosses to chair* L. *of table. Laughing)* Jimmie, Jimmie. How'd you find your mother, Jimmie?

JIMMIE. Fine, she's full of spirits. *(Crosses to back of chair* R. *of table. Quickly to pals.)* Boys, did you get it? That back pay? I mean, of course you did. *(*BILL *shakes head.* JIMMIE *continues in tone of anguish.)* Don't sye you didn't get it?

BILL. *(Shaking pockets)* Hear anything jingling, Jimmie?

JIMMIE. Mybe it's in ten-pun notes?

BILL. *(Showing empty pockets.)* Not a note!

JIMMIE. Wot?

BILL. All in the same boat—Officially dead!

JIMMIE. Not 'im? *(Pointing to* SPOOFY.*)*

BILL. Same thing. Now identify him.

SPOOFY. *(Who gazing out door* R. *Turns quickly)* Identify? Sergeant asked me who I was.

Told him it was none of his bally business! Haw! Haw! *(*SPOOFY *sits chair* R.*)*

JIMMIE. *(Fixing him with his eyes)* You think *that* was a good joke? *(Crossing to front chair* R. *of table. To* BILL.*)* Well, here we are. What are we going to do about it? *(Sits chair* R. *of table.)*

BILL. Three ghosts!

JIMMIE. Three live ghosts!—and one of them out of commission. *(Looks towards* SPOOFY.*)*

SPOOFY. I know where it's hidden.

JIMMIE. What?

SPOOFY. Money, jewels.

JIMMIE. You mean you 'ave got some stuff hidden in a crib?

SPOOFY. I can go out and get lots of things.

JIMMIE. *(To* BILL*)* I believe 'e could.

SPOOFY. What would you like me to bring back?

JIMMIE. Your brynes.

SPOOFY. Ha! Ha! Ha! *(Rises, goes into bay window.* BILL *sits* L. *of table.)*

JIMMIE. Bli'me he gives me the shivers with that laugh of his.

BILL. If we don't watch him he's liable to come back with somebody else's brains.

JIMMIE. Yes, we've got to take care of him—if only out of gratitude for the things he swiped for us while we were starving our w'y through Germany and Holland. What a wizard he was at swipin' things! You know, I can't make out whether he's a retired parson or a burglar. *(*SPOOFY *exits into kitchen.)*

BILL. *(Rises)* Well, I'm thankful for the clothes he swiped for us, anyway.

JIMMIE. He made a mess of my fit. Look at these collars around the ankles. Look at the coat, Bill. How does it 'ang? *(Pulls coat out in front.)*

BILL. It hangs on.

JIMMIE. 'Ow's the back? *(Crosses to left,* BILL *crosses* R. JIMMIE *leaves coat hang loose, back to audience.)*

BILL. You'd know it wasn't the front. *(Laughs, gazing around.)* Hello. There's Spoofy! *(Goes out,* C. *door* R. *into hall, looks about, looks upstairs.)*

JIMMIE. *(Goes to kitchen door, startled)* Now wot you doing of? Wot you doing there? *(*SPOOFY *comes out of kitchen looking around with a happy smile.* JIMMIE *ominously)* Wot you got there? *(Pointing to coat pocket, bringing* SPOOFY *down* L. BILL *comes down* R. *closing door.)*

SPOOFY. *(Sweet smile)* Where?

JIMMIE. *(Puts hands in Spoofy's pockets)* In there. Butter-knife, a salt cellar, nutmeg-grater—— *(Draws these articles out of* SPOOFY'S *pockets.)* Bli'me, what you want to swipe a nutmeg grater for?

SPOOFY. Oh, I'm not particular. *(*JIMMIE *throws things into kitchen.)*

JIMMIE. *(To* SPOOFY*)* Now listen, Spoofy; we're grateful to you, old man, for the food and the clothes you swiped for us; God knows wot we'd 'ave done without you—but you're in England now and you've got to cut it out—understand? Cut it all out. No more foraging.

SPOOFY. But you chaps have been good to me. I'd like to do something for you. I could rob a house or two.

JIMMIE. *(To* BILL*)* And have us all change our names to numbers. That's a pretty idea, that is.

SPOOFY. But we're three ghosts—the Government says so. Nobody could harm us.

JIMMIE. *(Crosses to front of table)* You get pinched and see how quickly the Government'll bring you back to life. No, Spoofy, you couldn't pull that alibi down at Scotland Yard. *(Sits on*

table. SPOOFY *slowly wanders up to chair front of fireplace, sits gazing into fire.)*

BILL. *(Crosses to* JIM*)* But there's no reason why you should be deprived of your back pay. You won't have any trouble proving you're very much alive. Old Sweetheart could identify you.

JIMMIE. I ain't so sure.

BILL. Why not?

JIMMIE. She's been collecting the life insurance. *(Crosses to* L.*)*

BILL. What?

JIMMIE. She might get into trouble.

BILL. It's the government's own fault. They wouldn't do anything to her.

JIMMIE. They'd make 'er pye it back. Bli'me, they'd pinch all the 'ome. *(Crosses to front of table.)* But how about you William Jones—It shouldn't be 'ard for you to come back to life and get your back pye. You can prove your identity by some of your American friends. *(Sits on table front.)*

BILL. That's just what I can't do.

JIMMIE. Why?

BILL. If the government's willing to call me dead, it suits me. *(Crosses to* R.*)*

JIMMIE. *(Pause, crosses to* BILL*)* Was there anything 'appened before you enlisted?

BILL. Jimmie, I think it's only fair that you should know. I came over here because it was a case of get out of the country or jail.

JIMMIE. Bli'me you're in 'is class. *(Refers to* SPOOFY.*)*

BILL. I know what class I'll be in if they ever get me back on the other side.

JIMMIE. Bill, I don't know what you did—*(Looks towards* SPOOFY.*)*—and 'e don't know himself what 'e did. *(Crosses to front of table, sits on it.)* But I do know I've been travelling in funny company.

BILL. *(Crosses to him)* That's what I'm leading to. There's no reason for our travelling together any longer.

JIMMIE. You mean—you want to split?

BILL. It's the best that I go on my own way now.

JIMMIE. You're going straight—— *(Hands on* BILL'S *shoulder.)*

BILL. You bet, Jimmie.

JIMMIE. That's fine, Bill, and we're going together, and when we get settled down 'ere, we'll get ourselves a job.

BILL. And in the meantime——

JIMMIE. You'll stay right here.

BILL. But I can't sponge on you.

JIMMIE. You said you were going straight, didn't you? God knows it's pretty 'ard to go straight on an empty stomach and no place to sleep. Now I don't know what you done, Bill, but we've been through a whole lot together, and there's no reason why we shouldn't stick a bit longer—I'd feel a damn sight easier, knowin' you was 'ere and not in the 'ands of the police.

SPOOFY. Police? *(Rises, comes down* L. *Pause.* SPOOFY *smiles.)*

JIMMIE. 'E understands that. *(Goes over to* SPOOFY. BILL *crosses to* R.*)* Now listen, Spoofy, you're going to stay here, too. Me an' Bill's going to look after you. You're going to get better someday, and when you do, you're going straight, too. *(*SPOOFY *whimpers.)* Bli'me, 'e thinks I'm abusin' 'im. Now, wot's the matter with you? *(Enter* OLD SWEETHEART *from* C. *door* R.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. I just been to the green grocer's—— *(Stops at sight of* JIMMIE'S *pals. Looks hard at* BILL. *Has apron full of onions.)*

JIMMIE. *(Crosses to* OLD SWEETHEART*)* Mo-

ther, my American pal—— *(To* BILL.*)* Bill, this is my mother.

BILL. *(Crosses to* MRS. GUBBINS, *shakes hands)* Pleased to meet you, Mrs. Gubbins. Jimmie talked of you so much, we've sort of adopted you.

OLD SWEETHEART. I'm sure that's verry kind. *(Crosses to front of table, taking large onion out of apron.)*

JIMMIE. *(Crosses to back of table, eyeing* SPOOFY *dubiously)* This is my mother, pal. Spoofy, my mother.

SPOOFY. *(Crosses to* L.C. *as* OLD SWEETHEART *is about to put onion on table, going to her and lifting hands to lip)* My lady!

JIMMIE. Mother! *(*OLD SWEETHEART *looks at* JIM.*)* He's crazy.

SPOOFY. *(Kisses it again, drops it with a graceful gesture)* I can always tell a perfect lady. *(Goes* L.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Oh, he don't act so crazy to me. *(*BILL R.*)*

JIMMIE. *(Laughing)* Ayn't that just like a woman? *(Lying across table.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Suddenly to* JIM*)* Did I 'ear you sye your other pal was an American?

JIMMIE. Yes.

OLD SWEETHEART. Wot's 'is nyme?

JIMMIE. Jones.

OLD SWEETHEART. Jones! What's his first name?

JIMMIE. William.

OLD SWEETHEART. William Jones. William Jones. *(Repeats with great satisfaction, chuckling.)*

BILL. *(Laughing)* Bill—to my friends.

OLD SWEETHEART. I 'opes we comes under that heading. *(Effusively, crosses to* BILL.*)*

BILL. At the head of the list, Mrs. Gubbins!

OLD SWEETHEART. I'll get you all something to eat. *(Starts for kitchen.)*

BILL. Oh, I'll forage around outside! Couldn't trouble you. *(Starts for* C. *door* R.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Quickly)* No, you must stye.

BILL. But I'm quite accustomed to foraging—— *(Going to* C. *door* R.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Quickly gets between* BILL *and door)* I couldn't let you get away. *(Hastily.)* Just a 'umble little supper! *(To* JIM.*)* Tripe and onions!

JIMMIE. Tripe and onions! Bill, you'll love it.

BILL. All right, I'll stay. *(Hangs hat on rack.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Crossing to kitchen)* You'll be sure he styes, Jimmie! *(Earnestly.)*

JIMMIE. I won't let 'im get awye, mother!

OLD SWEETHEART. It won't be much but you'll be 'eartily welcome! *(At kitchen door to* BILL.*)*

BILL. Thanks, Mrs. Gubbins.

OLD SWEETHEART. Myke yourself at 'ome! *(Curtsies to* SPOOFY. SPOOFY *bows. To* BILL.*)* I've tyken quite a fancy to you. *(Exits into kitchen and closes door, chuckling.)*

JIMMIE. 'Asn't she got a kind 'eart?

BILL. *(Absently)* She has. *(Coming down* R.*)*

JIMMIE. Boys. Wot do you sye to a drink? *(Getting off table.)*

BILL. *(Promptly)* You said something, Jimmie.

JIMMIE. I got a shilling.

SPOOFY. *(Interested)* Where? *(Crossing quickly to* JIM, *grabs for coin.)*

JIMMIE. I'll 'old it tight in my 'and. *(Eyes* SPOOFY. *Knock on door* C.D. R.*)* Entres!

*(*BILL *greatly surprised at seeing* ROSE. *Enter* ROSE GORDON *with small parcel under her arm, a hand painted bowl. She is pale, and not well, but has been attractive once. Leaves door open.)*

ROSE. *(Addressing* JIMMIE, *not seeing* BILL*)* Oh, I brought this in to show Mrs. Gubbins. *(Crosses to back of table.)*

JIMMIE. Mother? She's in the kitchen.

ROSE. Never mind! I won't disturb her. *(Starts out.)*

BILL. *(Moving towards* ROSE *involuntarily)* Rose! *(She recovers from her surprise, turns slowly and draws back. He continues to look at her.)*

JIMMIE. 'Ello! You two seem to know each other.

BILL. Rather——! *(*ROSE *draws breath quickly.)*

JIMMIE. Kinda funny you two meetin' 'ere like this; not the little girl you told me about?

BILL. Yes, it is.

JIMMIE. Well, we'll be going. *(Crosses to* C.D. R.*)* You know where to find us, Bill, around the corner. Come along, Spoofy. *(To* SPOOFY, *crosses very slowly.)* Don't hurry yourself. Oh, come on. *(*ROSE *puts bowl on table.)*

SPOOFY. *(Crosses to* C. *door* R.*)* What for?

JIMMIE. Ain't you got no indiscretion? *(*JIMMIE *takes* SPOOFY *by the arm and exits,* C. *door* R. *Closes door.)*

ROSE. Then you're not dead, after all?

BILL. Rose! How in the world do you happen to be here? *(Crosses little to* L.*)*

ROSE. My being here isn't the extraordinary part of it, it's you——

BILL. Why, what's the matter?

ROSE. Why didn't you let me know you were alive?

BILL. *(Crosses to* R. *of table)* I wrote you from the trenches; didn't you receive my letter?

ROSE. Yes, I received it. But that was before you were reported killed. Why didn't you write again?

BILL. I didn't write again because I hoped that before this time it wouldn't make any difference to you whether I was alive or not.

ROSE. Oh, I see. I guess I was just a little fool, dreaming of my soldier-boy sweetheart going over the top, wearing his girl's picture next his heart.

BILL. *(Takes photograph from his pocket)* Here's where I kept yours.

ROSE. *(Takes photo, reads inscription)* "From your little playmate in New York, whom you met again in London, and who will wait for you—through eternity." Sounds kind of foolish now, doesn't it? *(Hands photo back—crosses to* L. *of table.)*

BILL. *(Putting photo back—crosses to* L. *of table)* It means more to me than you'll ever know. Why, you and your mother—they were the only familiar faces I saw when I struck London before. And now, the first day I'm back—to meet you again like this? *(Down to front of table.)* It can't be merely a coincidence.

ROSE. It isn't. *(Crosses to front of table.)*

BILL. What do you mean?

ROSE. You'll be surprised to learn, I'm now earning my own living.

BILL. You mean you're really selling these bowls? *(Crosses to front of table. Picks up china bowl.)*

ROSE. A deluded crockery man around the corner occasionally buys the little masterpiece that I paint.

BILL. Is your mother here, too? *(Puts bowl down.)*

ROSE. Mother is back in New York.

BILL. Without you?

ROSE. Oh, conditions have changed since you saw me last.

BILL. Did anything go wrong with the estate?

ROSE. There's hardly enough left now for mother.

I keep her courage up by writing to her how well I'm doing with my china painting! And I send her a little money too.

BILL. *(Crosses to* R.*)* That's tough. But, how do you happen to be living in this house?

ROSE. You spoke in your letter of your pal, Jimmie Gubbins. I came here hoping to hear of you through him.

BILL. And you've been living here all this time? *(Goes a little to* ROSE.*)*

ROSE. Well, I wasn't so successful at first with my china paintings. I had to find cheaper lodgings, and this is the cheapest place I know of, so I moved here.

BILL. Rose, I'm sorry you came here. I had lots of time to think out there, and I hoped you'd think me dead. I was ashamed of myself for having asked you to marry me.

ROSE. *(Looks at him in surprise)* Ashamed?

BILL. I had no right to ask you to wait for me. I had no right to ask any girl to become my wife. You never knew there was another side to me—Rose. I want you to forget me. You're a plucky little girl, and you're making good on your own. I could only drag you down. *(Turn to* R. *Enter* MISS WOOFERS.*)*

MISS WOOFERS. *(Has jar of preserves as she enters)* Maw sent up this jar of preserves—— *(Sees* ROSE *and* BILL.*)* I beg your pardon.

BILL. Mrs. Gubbins is in there. *(Crosses to* R. *Motion to kitchen.* ROSE *goes to chair* L. *of table.)*

MISS WOOFERS. *(Going to back of table)* Maw's still wyhting for the rent, Miss Gordon.

BILL. The rent?

ROSE. *(Looks at* BILL. *To* PEG*)* I'm just going out to get it. I merely stopped in to ask Mrs. Gubbins for a piece of paper to wrap this bowl in.

MISS WOOFERS. Maw has been wyting three weeks. Maw says you're not to come back to-night, without the rent.

BILL. *(To* PEG, *crosses to table)* You mean your mother would put Miss Gordon out into the street?

MISS WOOFERS. Not if she consulted 'er feelings, but you cawn't in the lodging 'ouse business. *(To* ROSE.*)* It's not like running a 'alms 'ouse or a 'ospital. *(*ROSE *crosses to table, picks up bowl.)*

BILL. I'll wrap it up for you. *(*BILL *takes bowl, looks around for a sheet of paper.)*

MISS WOOFERS. Mrs. Gubbins keeps 'er old newspaper fer wrapping in the cupboard, over there. *(Indicates cupboard.)*

BILL. Thank you. *(*BILL *goes to cupboard, gets newspaper left by* BOLTON*; as he's wrapping up bowl.)*

MISS WOOFERS. Mrs. Gubbins? *(Sizing* ROSE *up when* BILL *is about finished wrapping bowl.)* Mrs. Gubbins? *(Starts to kitchen.* ROSE *crosses to* BILL. OLD SWEETHEART *appears at kitchen door.)* Ma sent this up——

BILL. I'll go with you. *(They start for* C.D. R.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. That's verry kind of your maw. *(Sees* MISS GORDON.*)* Oh, you here, Miss Gordon? *(Crosses to* BILL *and* ROSE, *gets between them, in front door.)*

BILL. We were just going out together. *(*MISS WOOFERS *goes to back of table.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Oh, you cawn't go out. *(To* ROSE.*)* You cawn't tyke him away from 'ere. 'E's my guest.

BILL. I'll be back shortly.

OLD SWEETHEART. I cawn't let you out of the 'ouse.

BILL. Why not?

OLD SWEETHEART. You promised to stye for supper, and I'm cooking it with me own 'ands.

ROSE. There's no need of his going. It's only around the corner.

BILL. But——

OLD SWEETHEART. I 'as first clime as 'is 'ostess. You drop in and 'ave a little bite with us, too, Miss Gordon.

ROSE. You're very kind; but I mustn't trouble you.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Opens door, helps* ROSE *out* C. *door* R.*)* No trouble at all.

ROSE. Thank you, I will. *(Exits* C. *door* R.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. This will be a verry merry occasion. *(Closing door.* BILL *goes down stage a little.)* Poor soul. I don't think she gets enough to eat. *(Leaning against the doorway.)*

BILL. You mean that she actually goes hungry? *(Starts towards door—*OLD SWEETHEART *puts hand on knob.)*

MISS WOOFERS. China-pynting ayn't very paying. Maw says when she first moved in, all she lived on was bread and butter and jam. Maw said, 'er was afraid 'er would die on 'er 'ands.

OLD SWEETHEART. That would 'ave been verry expensive for your maw. *(*BILL *sits on table by cupboard.)*

MISS WOOFERS. Yes. Maw says it's always best to get them out before they die. It's not so much wot they owe; it's the h'incidentals afterwards. Well, I must go into the kitchen and 'elp out with the dinner. *(Crosses to kitchen.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. You might cut up the tripe.

MISS WOOFERS. All right—— *(Exit into kitchen, closes door.* BILL *crosses left to fireplace.)*

BILL. How long has Miss Gordon been living here?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Crosses left a little)* Oh, interested in 'er already? Not that I blyme you. She's too good looking by 'arf not to 'ave a sweetheart.

BILL. *(Turning to* OLD SWEETHEART*)* She has no callers, then? *(Sits at fireplace, looking at* ROSE'S *picture.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Not 'at I knows of. *(Goes to lamp, business of fixing it. Sits chair by lamp.)*

(Enter C. *door* R. JIMMIE *and* SPOOFY. JIMMIE *singing.* SPOOFY *closes door.)*

JIMMIE. Hello, Mother. Dinner ready? *(Hangs up hat, crosses table* C. SPOOFY *down* R.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. It will be. Miss Woofers is in the kitchen.

JIMMIE. *(*OLD SWEETHEART *on platform.* JIMMIE *rubbing hands.)* Oh, fine. Getting 'er 'and in! 'Ope it will be better than the beer. There wasn't a kick in a barrel of it.

SPOOFY. The water was beautiful.

JIMMIE. *(Disgusted)* Water?

SPOOFY. And out of a clean glass. *(Blissfully.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Rises)* Speaking of water? If the gentlemen would like to wash their 'ands——

SPOOFY. *(Puzzled, crosses to* JIMMIE*)* Wash, wash?

JIMMIE. *(Tapping him on the shoulder)* Yes, you're in England now. Where the bawth's a national h'institution. *(To* BILL, *crosses to* BILL *back of chair.)* Bill! Thank 'eaven the barth-tub's nailed down. *(*BILL *doesn't laugh.* JIMMIE *looks at him puzzled.)* I said thank 'eaven the barth-tub's nailed down.

BILL. I heard you. *(Rises.)* Where'll I go?

JIMMIE. *(*BILL *crosses to door* R.*)* Go in my little room over there.

BILL. All right, come on, Spoofy.

JIMMIE. And, Bill, see that Spoofy don't pinch the soap. *(*BILL *and* SPOOFY *exit* R. *door.* BILL *closes door.* JIMMIE *sits at fireplace, as he lights cigarette.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(To* JIMMIE, *watching them off. Then crosses* R.*)* Jimmie, we're rich. *(Crosses back to* R. *of table.)*

JIMMIE. Eh? Meanin' the h'insurance?

OLD SWEETHEART. No, better than that, Jimmie. *One thousand* pounds.

JIMMIE. Eh? What for?

OLD SWEETHEART. Rewards for—*'im. (Pointing to room where* SPOOFY *and* BILL *have gone.)*

JIMMIE. For 'im?

OLD SWEETHEART. I mean for *us*—for *'im*——

JIMMIE. What the 'ell do you mean— for *us* for *'im?*

OLD SWEETHEART. I mean for 'is 'ead—'is person—the h'apprehendin' of him.

JIMMIE. *(Bewildered)* Who? Spoofy?

OLD SWEETHEART. No, the American. *'E's* wanted——

JIMMIE. What for? *(Rises, crosses to front of table.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Coming down a little)* Because 'e's a criminal—a desperate character——

JIMMIE. Wot rot!

OLD SWEETHEART. It's the truth, Jimmie. *(Crosses to* JIM *in front of table.)* I seen it in the pyper—with 'is picture—a living likeness—you couldn't be mistaken, Jimmie. It was brought me by a gen'leman who arsked all about 'im—William Jones, wot enlisted the syme time you did—'e's

wanted bad—the gent will give a *thousand* pounds for information.

JIMMIE. Wot's 'e wanted for?

OLD SWEETHEART. I don't know, Jimmie, but something *desperate*. Murder, most likely!

JIMMIE. Don't talk silly! *(Laughs.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. It's no larfin' matter, Jimmie. Didn't the gentleman read me the article, and show me 'is picture.

JIMMIE. It's my opinion it's the 'ot gin that's talkin'!

OLD SWEETHEART. 'Ot gin! *(With a shriek.)* And me 'ardly a tystin' of it! *(JIMMIE sniffs.)* Besides, it wasn't 'ot. I took it cold. *(Crosses to chair R.)*

JIMMIE. Syme thing!

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Whimpering)* 'E sat right there, Jimmie. *(Pointing to chair R.)* I can see 'im now—and I can prove it to you. Jimmie, by the newspaper. You'd 'ave to be believin' them. And it's our duty to be turnin' 'im over.

JIMMIE. *(With a sneer)* Duty be 'anged! *(Goes up L. to back of chair.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Wouldn't you be up'oldin' the laws of the country, Jimmie?

JIMMIE. The laws be 'anged, too—if they wants to 'ang my pal. *(Defiantly.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. But if we don't give 'im up, it would be *compoundin'* a *felony*—And I 'opes I 'as brought you up to be a law-abidin' citizen, Jimmie?

JIMMIE. *(Crosses to OLD SWEETHEART)* You ayn't goin' to give up my pal—not for 100,000 pounds!

OLD SWEETHEART. Jimmie, you would be cheatin' me—your own step-mother?

JIMMIE. Yes, I would.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Loudly)* Then you shan't! I won't let you. I'll give 'im up *myself!* That I will!

JIMMIE. Not while I'm 'ere to prevent it! *(Sits on table back to audience.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. We'll see!

JIMMIE. We will. You're welcome to the insurance money, but when it comes to givin' hup a pal, I draws a line——

OLD SWEETHEART. But 'e ayn't no pal of *mine!*

JIMMIE. I should 'ope not! I'd 'ate to think what would 'appen to a pal of yours.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(With much dignity)* I 'opes my feelings for the law would rise above hulterior motives.

JIMMIE. *(Crosses to door* C. *Calls* BILL. *Crossing back to foot of table.* OLD SWEETHEART *goes to chair* R. BILL *enters, crosses to* JIMMIE. *To* BILL*)* Beat it!

BILL. What?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(To* BILL*)* Don't you do it! You stye to supper. *(Wheedling.)*

BILL. I had already made up my mind, Mrs. Gubbins, to accept your hospitality. *(*OLD SWEETHEART *contented sigh.)*

JIMMIE. Then get it out of your 'ead. It won't be *'ospitality!* At least, not wot *I'd* call genuine 'ospitality.

BILL. What do you mean?

JIMMIE. They're arter you.

BILL. Police? *(*JIMMIE *nods.)* I'm not surprised.

JIMMIE. Better go, while the goin's good!

OLD SWEETHEART. But 'e's 'ungry! W'y should 'e 'urry? *(Eagerly.)*

JIMMIE. But 'e might eat something that didn't

"Three Live Ghosts."

agree with 'im! Tyke my advice—— *(Indicates door.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. But 'e *shan't! (Goes quickly to* C. *door* R.*)*

JIMMIE. *(Catches her)* Get away from that door. Get away from that door. *(Throwing* OLD SWEETHEART *to* L.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Tyke your 'ands arf!

JIMMIE. Oh, I wouldn't 'art you!

OLD SWEETHEART. 'E mustn't go! I'll scream. *(*BILL *gets hat, goes* C. *door* R.*)*

JIMMIE. God knows I'd 'ate to lay my 'ands on you, but they're not goin' to take 'im.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(To* JIMMIE*)* There's a thousand pounds reward, and I means to 'ave it.

BILL. *(About to exit)* A thousand pounds reward—on me? *(Closes door. Down to* R. *Back of chair.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. To which I am justly entitled.

JIMMIE. *(Crosses to* BILL*)* Don't mind wot she says. She ayn't near as greedy as she makes out she is. Now you run along—she ayn't going to stop you.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Over* JIM'S *shoulder)* Yes, I am. *(*JIMMIE *looks at her.)*

BILL. *(To front)* That won't be necessary, Mrs. Gubbins. *(Turns to* JIM.*)* I'm going to stay right here.

JIMMIE. And wyte to be took?

OLD SWEETHEART. Wye not? Ayn't it better to be took wyting than to be caught running?

BILL. I'm goin' to give myself up.

JIMMIE. That ayn't wot you said when we was in the shell-holes, together. You didn't get cold feet then. At the sight of about forty 'uns chargin! "Ply the game"—that's wot you said. And we did—till we couldn't ply it any longer.

BILL. This is different—not that kind of a game—and I've no right to drag you into it.

JIMMIE. Oh, I ayn't particular—a fight's a fight—to 'ell with wot it's about.

BILL. *(To* JIM*)* No, my mind's made up. *(To front.)* I'm going to surrender.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Who has been listening with much approval.)* Jimmie! You listen to 'im and you won't go wrong.

BILL. *(To front)* Thanks, Mrs. Gubbins. *(To* JIMMIE.*)* And Jimmie, you listen to your mother.

JIMMIE. *(Pause)* Oh! Well, it ayn't no funeral of mine.

OLD SWEETHEART. It ayn't no funeral—it's the law——

JIMMIE. *(Nasty tone)* All of a sudden you got law on the bryne.

OLD SWEETHEART. Right's right, Jimmie, and as General Booth used to sye, "I refuse to compromising with the devil."

JIMMIE. *(To* BILL*)* A little while ago you said you were going to fight it out here. Wot myde you change your mind so suddenly?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(To* JIM.*)* You 'eard wot 'e said. Are you tryin' to talk 'm out of hit again? *(*JIM, *disgusted, goes to window.)*

BILL. *(Crosses to* OLD SWEETHEART*)* Don't be afraid, Mrs. Gubbins. Nobody is going to talk me out of it.

OLD SWEETHEART. That's right. Be firm.

BILL. I'm perfectly willing to let you give me up and get the money.

OLD SWEETHEART. I knew I was going to like you.

BILL. But there's something I'm going to ask you, Mrs. Gubbins.

OLD SWEETHEART. Eh?

BILL. I want half the reward.

OLD SWEETHEART. 'Alf my reward! You asks me to give you 'alf of my reward? Impossible! Couldn't be done!

BILL. It's better to take half than get nothing.

OLD SWEETHEART. It's the first time I ever 'eard of a desperate criminal clyming 'alf 'is own reward.

BILL. I'm not asking this for myself. There's a little girl upstairs that's up against it—I want to do something for her.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Outraged)* 'Alf my reward to 'er? *(Sarcastically.)* Oh, I like that! That's even worse!

BILL. I'm not going to argue about it, Mrs. Gubbins. Either you agree to turn over half the money to Miss Gordon, or you'll never give me up.

OLD SWEETHEART. It's robbery! Plain 'ighwys robbery! I won't submit to it!

BILL. Very well, then, good-bye. *(Going to* C. *door* R.*)* Good-bye, Jimmie!

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Quickly crosses to* C. *door* R. *Stops* BILL.*)* Wyte! Wyte! If you insist on Miss Gordon cheating me out of 'alf my reward, she shall 'ave it. *(*BILL *closes door.)*

JIMMIE. *(To* BILL *coming down* C.*)* You don't think that little girl would touch any of that money, do you?

OLD SWEETHEART. I 'ope not!

BILL. *(Crosses to* JIMMIE*)* I want her to get it so she doesn't know where it comes from.

JIMMIE. 'Ow do you think you can manage that?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Coming down* R.*)* I 'ave it. Hi'll pye it over to 'er in h'installments. Hi'll leave it in 'er room, a shillin' a week.

BILL. Look here, Jimmie. I'm going to ask you to do me one last favor. There isn't time now to figure things out. I want you to promise me to get

'alf that reward from your mother and get it to Miss Gordon somehow. Will you do that for me, Jimmie?

JIMMIE. No. I can't stop you from giving yourself h'up; but none of that money will pass through my 'ands. And that's final, Bill. *(Turns* L.*)*

BILL. I understand the way you feel about it, Jimmie. But I'm going through, and I know you well enough to feel that when that reward is paid over you'll see that Miss Gordon gets her share of it. *(To* OLD SWEETHEART, *crosses to* R.*)* Come on, Mrs. Gubbins. Where do we go for that reward? Scotland Yard?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Quickly)* Oh, no, you mustn't go there, they'd be claiming it. It's the police in America, wot's offering it, and we 'ave to go to the gentleman wot was 'ere.

BILL. Who was he?

OLD SWEETHEART. 'E 'ad a bowler 'at and nice eyes. And 'e was most particular about comin' to *'im if I 'eard—— (Bows.)*

BILL. What's his name?

OLD SWEETHEART. I forgot.

BILL. What was his address.

OLD SWEETHEART. I can't remember—it's in the pyper! That I put here—— *(Crosses to closet, looking.)* Why, where is it? I'm sure I put it there. I—I saved it *especially. (In agitated tones.)* It seems gone! *(With consternation.)*

JIMMIE. You mean the pyper with reward in it is gone?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Almost beside herself)* Yes. Somebody stole it.

JIMMIE. And you don't know the nyme of the man wot brought it?

OLD SWEETHEART. No.

JIMMIE. *(To front)* Now, ayn't that lucky.

OLD SWEETHEART. Lucky——!

BILL. Do you mean that old newspaper that was in the cupboard?

OLD SWEETHEART. That's it. Do you know what's become of it?

BILL. Yes. I took it.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Crosses to* BILL*)* You? You got no right to it. It's my pyper and I wants it.

BILL. I'm sorry—I haven't got it.

OLD SWEETHEART. Wot did you do with it?

BILL. I wrapped it around a piece of china that Miss Gordon was taking out to sell.

JIMMIE. Did you know what it was?

BILL. No. *(Crosses to* JIMMIE.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. You sye Miss Gordon took it away with 'er? *(Follows* BILL.*)*

BILL. Yes.

OLD SWEETHEART. Where did she tyke it to?

BILL. I don't know.

JIMMIE. 'Ow long 'as she been gone?

BILL. Only a few minutes.

OLD SWEETHEART. Hi'll find 'er. *(Starts for the* C. *door* R. BILL *crosses* R.*)* There ayn't nobody goin' to tyke my reward from *me.*

JIMMIE. *(Catches* OLD SWEETHEART *at door, bringing her to chair* L. *of table)* Sit down.

OLD SWEETHEART. I don't want to sit down.

JIMMIE. Sit down.

OLD SWEETHEART. I won't sit down. *(Sits.)*

JIMMIE. You ayn't goin' to give 'im up, and you ayn't goin' to touch no reward. Make up your mind to that.

OLD SWEETHEART. Hi never changes my mind. *(Rises.)*

JIMMIE. Sit down——

MISS WOOFERS. *(Enters from kitchen)* Dinner's ready.

JIMMIE. Bill, go and call Spoofy. *(*BILL *exits door* R.*)* Lay the table, Peg—— *(*MISS WOOFERS *exit kitchen.* JIMMIE *crosses to* R. *of table; as he is doing so* OLD SWEETHEART *grumbles to herself, about to sit.* BILL *enters door* R.*)*

BILL. Jimmy, Spoofy's gone.

OLD SWEETHEART. See, and her one's gone. *(Rises, sneaks off,* C. *door* R.*)*

JIMMIE. What do you mean?

BILL. The window was open, he must have gone that way.

JIMMIE. Blyme——

BILL. We can't let him wander around loose. *(*MISS WOOFERS *enters from kitchen with tray of dishes, etc.)*

JIMMIE. It's up to us to find him. Come on, quick. *(*JIMMIE *and* BILL *go to* C. *door* R. *Get hats off rack.)*

MISS WOOFERS. Jimmie——

JIMMIE. Hello.

MISS WOOFERS. Where are you going?

JIMMIE. To find Spoofy.

MISS WOOFERS. What about the tripe?/

JIMMIE. Damn the tripe. *(Exit* JIMMIE, BILL, C. *door* R.*)*

CURTAIN

ACT TWO

SCENE: *Same as Act One.*

TIME: *The following morning.*

DISCOVERED: OLD SWEETHEART *seated on a chair near the open door leading into the hall. She is tired and sleepy and looks as if she had been sitting there all night.* BILL *is standing near the window, the panes of which are thick with fog.* JIMMIE *is at breakfast table, finishing breakfast. The other two have either eaten or don't care to eat. . . .* JIMMIE'S *coat on back of chair head of table.*

JIMMIE. *(Stuffing himself—to* BILL.*)* Fog liftin'?

BILL. *(At window)* No.

JIMMIE. Gives me the shivers!

BILL. We should have known better than to leave him in that room alone.

JIMMIE. Who the 'ell would expect 'im to jump out of the window?

OLD SWEETHEART. Oh, 'e was a nut! But, 'er, going out with the china-bowl and not comin' back!

JIMMIE. I'm thinking of Spoofy, poor old chap!

OLD SWEETHEART. An' I'm thinkin' of the newspyper, wot she took an' 'asn't brought back.

JIMMIE. Maybe they've got 'im in a hospital and are cutting 'im up. *(Bus. with knife.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Maybe she fell off the embankment—and the *newspyper's drowned.*

BILL. Oh, they'll both turn up all right—I hope.

OLD SWEETHEART. *'Oping don't get you nowhere.*

JIMMIE. *(Fork in air, mouth full of food)* Well, it don't cost you nothin' to 'ope.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Mournfully)* A thousand pounds lost!

JIMMIE. Oh! Forget it!

OLD SWEETHEART. But I can't!

BILL. Don't be cross with her.

OLD SWEETHEART. Tyke example of 'im! *(*MISS WOOFERS *starts from upstairs.)*

JIMMIE. 'Im? 'E'd be *shaken* 'ands with the *'angman! (Enter* MISS WOOFERS *with the morning paper and tray, crosses to table upper* R. *end.)*

MISS WOOFERS. 'Ere, Jimmie, 'ere's the mornin' pyper.

JIMMIE. *(Takes paper)* Thanks!

MISS WOOFERS. 'Ave you 'eard anything from 'im?

BILL. Not a word.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Mournfully)* It ayn't wot's 'appened to 'im. It's wot's 'appened to 'er.

MISS WOOFERS. *(Crosses* R. *to* OLD SWEETHEART*)* Ma says that young lady, Miss Gordon, didn't come 'ome all night. Ma was wytin' for the rent.

BILL. *(To* PEG*)* Probably she didn't have the money. If anything has happened to her, your mother is to blame.

MISS WOOFERS. *(To* BILL*)* Ma says she wouldn't wonder if it wasn't the first time she styde out all night.

OLD SWEETHEART. It wouldn't 'ave been so bad if she 'adn't taken the newspyper.

JIMMIE. Yes; that's what made it *worse!* Fancy stying out all night, with a newspyper. *(Drinks out of saucer.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Your ma should be more careful! Didn't she 'ave *references* when she came 'ere?

MISS WOOFERS. *(Goes to front of table. Separates breakfast things)* I'll take the breakfast things. *(Puts white dishes on tray.* OLD SWEETHEART *goes to* R. *of table, picks up small cream pitcher.)* That belongs to ma. *(Takes cream pitcher from* OLD SWEETHEART.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Loftily)* I ayn't tryin' to keep it.

MISS WOOFERS. Ma's particular to get things back. *(Crosses to* C. *door* R.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Huffed)* So I 'ave noticed. *(Has white sugar bowl.)*

MISS WOOFERS. *(To* OLD SWEETHEART*)* So kind of you to 'elp. *(Exit* C. *door* R. *Goes upstairs.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Loftily, still huffed by the imputation she wished to appropriate the cream pitcher)* Don't mention it. *(Goes to door with sugar bowl, looking back to few things left on table.)* Those belong in my kitchen.

BILL. I'll attend to them. *(Going to table.)*

*(*OLD SWEETHEART *exits door leading into hall and upstairs, leaves door open.* BILL *starts for kitchen with dishes.* JIMMIE *looks at paper, sings.)*

JIMMIE. "He took her by the lily white 'and, He kissed her cheeks and chin; He waited till the tide came in *(Up)* and gently pushed her in." *(Gives exclamation.)* Bill, I sye, Bill!

BILL *(At kitchen door)* Eh? What is it? *(Enters, bringing tray, closes door.* BILL *to back of table, puts dishes on tray during conversation.)*

JIMMIE. *(Indicating paper)* Look at this. *(*BILL *mechanically looks over paper.)*

BILL. *(Reading)* "Kidnapping—Burglary—Robbery—Kensington Gardens——"

JIMMIE. *(Shaking head)* It's very strange!

BILL. What's strange?

JIMMIE. 'E disappears and look wot 'appens. *(Tapping paper.)*

BILL. Oh, robberies happen every day.

JIMMIE. But, this ayn't no ordinary robbery! It's a big affair. *I* 'as a 'unch they ayn't nobody but *Spoofy* could pull off a job like this! 'Im with 'is 'ead for crime!

BILL. *(Uneasily)* Nonsense!

JIMMIE. Kensington Gardens? Wasn't it there 'e wanted to turn into a 'ouse?

BILL. I don't know. He wanted to turn into so many houses, I couldn't keep track of them.

JIMMIE. Wot else does it sye?

BILL. *(Reading)* "A liberal reward will be offered."

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Outside by stairs)* All right, Miss Woofers! *(Leaves door open.)*

JIMMIE. "Reward"—'ide it! *(Hurriedly hides paper as* OLD SWEETHEART *enters* C. *door* R., *crosses to* L. *of table.* JIMMIE *puts on coat, crosses* R. BILL *up to window.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Looking about)* Anything in the morning pyper?

JIMMIE. *(Hastily shoving paper in pocket)* Not a thing.

BILL. No news.

OLD SWEETHEART. Not like that other newspyper! I almost 'ad it on the tip of me tongue, the name of the man wot brought it!

JIMMIE. *(During following conversation* OLD

SWEETHEART *and* JIMMIE *clear the table of everything)* You did?

OLD SWEETHEART. Yes; it began with a "B."

JIMMIE. *(Hastily)* Beans? That's it—Mr. Beans!

OLD SWEETHEART. It had *two* syllables.

JIMMIE. Baked beans!

OLD SWEETHEART. That wasn't it. *(Removes table cloth.)*

JIMMIE. Don't worry and don't think too 'ard—

OLD SWEETHEART. I'm too tired to think. *(Exit* OLD SWEETHEART *in kitchen with breakfast things.* BILL *opens door for her, then closes it.)*

JIMMIE. *(Crosses, sits chair* R., *pause)* Bill! It's up to us to see nothing 'appens to Spoofy.

BILL. *(Crosses to him)* Of course! But the problem is to find him.

JIMMIE. *(Hopefully)* Mybe, 'e'll find *us.*

BILL. Let me hope so. *(Thoughtfully crosses to table, sits on* R. *side.)* I have heard that those who suffer from shell-shock sometimes get back to normal if they receive another shock. In that case, he might forget to hunt us up.

JIMMIE. Let us pray 'e styes barmy. 'E was so 'appy without 'is brynes! Why, it would break 'is heart to be shoved in jail.

BILL. I'm still hoping he didn't do this.

JIMMIE. Oh! It's a safe bet. Look what a night it was for a crime—fog thick as pea-soup. Why, I can just see him now, jumpin' out the window, creeping along stealthily like, smiling as 'e picks out some place to rob.

BILL. The crockery man said Miss Gordon hadn't been there. I wonder what could have happened to her. *(Coming to front of table.)*

JIMMIE. Oh! She could have been in a dozen places.

*(*OLD SWEETHEART *enters from kitchen, closes door.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Very happy, smiling)* I 'as an idea. *(Coming down* L.*)*

JIMMIE. Then something's sure to 'appen.

OLD SWEETHEART. I knows how to get back the pyper.

JIMMIE. How? *(*BILL *up* L. *to back of table.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. We'll offer a reward for it.

JIMMIE. Another reward!

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Crosses to* R.*—to* JIMMIE.*)* I'll offer 'arf a crown for an old newspyper that only costs a penny. *(*ROSE *passes the open door toward stairs, sees* BILL*—starts upstairs.* OLD SWEETHEART *sees her.)* 'Ere she is! Miss Gordon! *(Rushes to door and seizes* ROSE.*)* Now I don't 'ave to waste 'arf a crown for it. Come in—you must come in—I won't tyke "no" for an answer. *(Leads her down* R. BILL *places chair for her from* R. *of table. He stays* C.*)* My, you do look tired! *(*ROSE *sits.* OLD SWEETHEART *on* R. *of* ROSE. *Sharply.)* Wot 'as become of hit?

ROSE. It?

OLD SWEETHEART. The newspyper.

ROSE. Newspaper?

OLD SWEETHEART. The bit of china was wrapped in?

JIMMIE. Don't tell her, Miss. It's none of her business.

OLD SWEETHEART. It was my pyper. Stolen hout of this 'ouse, and I demands to know wot's become of hit.

ROSE. If you mean the piece of paper the china bowl was wrapped in—I had bad luck with it.

BILL. Bad luck?

ROSE. I slipped and broke the bowl.

OLD SWEETHEART. That was very bad luck. But it ayn't so much wot's 'appened to the bowl. Hit's wot's become of the newspyper.

ROSE. I left it with the pieces.

*(*MISS WOOFERS *starts from upstairs.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Where was that?

ROSE. In front of the little tobacco shop this side of Twichenham Court Road.

(Enter MISS WOOFERS—*stays up back.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Did you leave it on the pavement?

ROSE. I pushed the lot with my feet into the street.

OLD SWEETHEART. Into the street? Oh, my 'eart! *(*OLD SWEETHEART *staggers.* JIMMIE *catches her.)*

JIMMIE. It's gone. *(Makes faces at her.)*

ROSE. *(Quietly studying her)* Is anything the matter, Mrs. Gubbins?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Wailing)* Wot could have become of hit *since?*

ROSE. Really—— *(Looks at* BILL—*looks away.)* I'm afraid I can't tell you. Gone the way of all broken things, I suppose.

BILL. *(Low)* I'm sorry.

ROSE. Are you? *(Steals look at him.)* Well, most of my little capital went into it. *(She says this as if it didn't matter.)*

MISS WOOFERS. *(Coming down, crosses to* L. *of* ROSE*)* Then you didn't bring back the rent?

ROSE. *(In a tired voice, head down)* No.

OLD SWEETHEART. I ayn't worryin' about that. You're *sure* you didn't bring back the newspyper?

ROSE. What use would it be to me?

MISS WOOFERS. Ma said she'd like the room.

JIMMIE. I sye!

MISS WOOFERS. *Under the circumstances,* you've 'avin' been hout all night.

ROSE. *(Quietly)* I believe I was out all night.

MISS WOOFERS. Ma syes—*(Virtuously.)*—no young unmarried female——

JIMMIE. *(Rises)* Wot the 'ell you mean!

MISS WOOFERS. Oh, Jimmie! *(Crosses to table* L. *quickly.)*

ROSE. *(Rises to back of chair)* She's quite right. A young unmarried female—— *(Looks at* BILL, *who gazes away uneasily.)*

MISS WOOFERS. Ma—says—it's immortal—highly shocking—and it is! Ma says turn her out. Ma's right. After all, what does it matter? *(Exits* C. *door* R. *Leaves door open.)*

BILL. *(Quickly goes to door* C. *door* R.*)* Rose! *(Coming down.)* That gets rid of *two* of us!

OLD SWEETHEART. Eh?

BILL. If *she* goes, I go!

OLD SWEETHEART. *(In consternation)* But you cawn't go! *(Crosses to* BILL.*)*

JIMMIE. *(Challengingly)* W'y not?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(To* BILL*)* We gentlemen would cheat a porr widow hout of a thousand pounds reward.

BILL. When Miss Gordon leaves this house, I go, too!

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Quickly)* Then she shan't go! *(Crosses to* MISS WOOFERS *who has entered.* BILL *goes* R. *to* JIMMIE.*)* After all, there might not be no 'arm styeing out all night. She might 'ave been engaged on some errand of mercy like 'ospital nursing! You run along. I'll fix it with your maw. so she can stye! *(*MISS WOOFERS *exits* C. *door* R.

To BILL.) Mrs. Woofers will tyke my word for 'er, knowin' I'd be that particular vouching for anyone. Besides, somebody *worse* might move in. *(Exit* C. *door* R. *and upstairs. Leaves door open.)*

JIMMIE. *(Crosses* L., *places chair at table, sits on table front.* BILL *sits chair* R.*)* You think a lot of that little girl, don't you?

BILL. Yes, Jimmie.

JIMMIE. Tell me, Bill, what's the matter?

BILL. Oh, I've been a fool.

JIMMIE. Bly'me, you'd have been lonesome if you hadn't. You want to marry her?

BILL. I did.

JIMMIE. Why don't you ask her again? Lots more girls than men 'ere now.

BILL. That wouldn't make any difference.

JIMMIE. All the difference in the world. Now the girls just jump at your 'ead. Bly'me, this is a 'appy country. 'Ave you 'ad a bit of trouble with 'er?

BILL. What makes you think that?

JIMMIE. Where there's girls, there's generally trouble, especially when they runs around and stops out all night.

BILL. Jimmie! *(Rises quickly. Pause.)*

JIMMIE. *(Crosses to* BILL. BILL *goes to* JIM*)* I'm sorry, Bill. I didn't mean to be funny. Why don't you two go awye together——

BILL. No, Jimmie. *(Looks towards door leading into hall.)* She's pretty nearly down and out—that's plain enough. Five hundred pounds would be a godsend to her, Jimmie. *(Crosses to* L.*)* We've got to make sure that reward doesn't get away from her.

(Enter OLD SWEETHEART *coming down* R.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(To* BILL*)* It's all right. I fixed it up so she can stye.

BILL. Good! I hope you can induce Miss Gordon to stay.

OLD SWEETHEART. Five 'undred pounds ought to be h'inducement enough.

*(*MISS WOOFERS *enters hall, from upstairs.)*

BILL. Don't you understand? She must never know where the money comes from.

JIMMIE. Leave it to 'er not to tell.

MISS WOOFERS. *(Excitedly; in the hall)* 'E's coming! 'E's coming!

OLD SWEETHEART. Who? The gentleman with the bowler 'at? *(Goes to* C. *door* R. *and into hall.)*

MISS WOOFERS. No. Spoofy! *(Comes in.)*

JIMMIE. Spoofy! Good! *(Goes up to* C. *door* R. BILL *follows.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Who has looked down the stairs.)* My God, wot's 'e bringin' with 'im! *(Comes back into room. They line up expectantly.)*

(Enter SPOOFY, *with aristocratic perambulator and baby in it. Balloons are fastened to the perambulator, with silly smile and vacuous expression,* SPOOFY *wears a stunning shiny, high silk hat; pauses with perambulator down stage and surveys it with a rapt expression.* BILL *closes door* C. D. R. *All follow* SPOOFY *down stage.* BILL *crosses to* L. JIMMIE *on* L. *of* SPOOFY.*)*

SPOOFY. *(Wiping perspiration off face.)* I've got back.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Peering into perambulator)* Wot a beautiful baby! *(*R. *of baby carriage.* MISS WOOFERS R. *of* OLD SWEETHEART.*)*

"Three Live Ghosts"

See Page 59

SPOOFY. *(Proudly)* Jolly little chap. Took to me right away.

JIMMIE. I should sye *you* took 'im!

SPOOFY. For a little airing!

JIMMIE. At what time?

SPOOFY. Midnight or thereabouts.

BILL. Where'd you *get* it?

SPOOFY. Nursery.

BILL. Whose—where?

SPOOFY. I've forgotten.

BILL. *(Earnestly)* Try to think.

SPOOFY. *(Helplessly)* Can't. I didn't *steal* it. *(Eagerly.)*

JIMMIE. No?

SPOOFY. He *asked* to be taken out!

JIMMIE. *(Making funny sound)* In wot langwidge?

SPOOFY. He crowed.

JIMMIE. To be taken for an airing—at midnight?

SPOOFY. Yes. And he put out his little arms—so—— *(Extends long arms with silly smile.)*

JIMMIE. *(Surveying him)* Oh! *(Crosses to* L. *and upstage.)*

BILL. *(Crosses to* SPOOFY*)* This is serious business. Now, Spoofy, I want you to listen to me.

SPOOFY. *(Plaintively)* Are you going to be cross with me?

BILL. *(Sternly)* How did you get into the house? Where was the house?

JIMMIE. What kind of a 'ouse was it?

SPOOFY. A big house! *(Brightening.)* I remember that, because the baby looked so small and lonesome in it.

BILL. *(Impatiently)* You *got in!* How did you get *out?*

SPOOFY. Side entrance. Very quiet! *(Fingers on lips.)* Little chap seemed to know.

JIMMIE. 'Elpin' at 'is own kidnappin'!

SPOOFY. *(Confidently)* I thought he'd make a nice little pal for Jimmie. (JIMMIE, *with gesture of disgust, turns away and upstage.)*

BILL. *(To* SPOOFY*)* Well, you got out. What did you do then?

SPOOFY. *(Happy smile)* We perambulated!

BILL. All night?

SPOOFY. Oh, no. We camped out later—in the park.

JIMMIE. In the park?

SPOOFY. Yes! Some Lung seemed to enjoy it!

JIMMIE. Some Lung! *(Crosses to baby, looks baby over.)* What you got, a Chinese baby?

SPOOFY. I call him Some Lung on account of his beautiful voice!

JIMMIE. *(Ominously)* I'm glad 'e 'ad a good time.

SPOOFY. Oh, the jolliest time! In the morning a great big woolly sheep came up. *(Looks between* JIMMIE *and* BILL.*)* Some Lung wanted to play with him. I tried to bring it along.

JIMMIE. A sheep!

SPOOFY. Yes, but it butted! So we bought a few other things. *(Takes Jumping Jack out of carriage.)* I tried to buy a monkey, but the man wouldn't sell that.

JIMMIE. *(Shaking head)* You don't need a monkey.

BILL. What were you going to buy it *with?*

SPOOFY. *(Surprised; puts Jumping Jack back)* Money.

JIMMIE. You had some money?

SPOOFY. Of course. I've got plenty of money. *(Takes out English notes—wads of bills.)*

MISS WOOFERS. My Gawd! 'E's robbed the Bank of England!

BILL. *(To* SPOOFY*)* Where did you take that money from?

SPOOFY. The safe.

JIMMIE. How?

SPOOFY. Just helped myself.

JIMMIE. Oh! Just like that—so simple. *(Business.)*

BILL. You opened the safe?

SPOOFY. Naturally.

JIMMIE. I should sye, unnaturally.

BILL. Is that money all you took from the safe?

SPOOFY. *(Smiling)* Oh, no. I shoves a few knick-knacks into my pocket. *(Takes jewels out of right hand pocket and gives them to* OLD SWEETHEART.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Taking jewels)* Ayn't they beautiful!

SPOOFY. Here's some more! *(Takes diamond broach from his left hand pocket and gives it to* OLD SWEETHEART.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Takes jewels from* SPOOFY*)* I wonder wot 'e'd bring back if—'e went out again? *(Putting jewels in her apron pocket; to* PEG*)* I 'as always dreamed of wearing diamonds!

BILL. This is serious business.

JIMMIE. *(To* OLD SWEETHEART*)* Mother! Give them back to him.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Tossing her head)* Ther verry idea!

SPOOFY. *(Intervening with yawn)* Let her have them!

JIMMIE. *(Disgusted)* What do you think of that?

SPOOFY. I'm getting tired. Feel sleepy. Believe I could do with a nap.

BILL. Yes, you've *earned* a rest.

SPOOFY. Where's that bed?

OLD SWEETHEART. Right this wye. It tyn't a verry comfortable bed—— *(*MISS. WOOFERS *up* R. *Points* SPOOFY *to door* R. *Exit* SPOOFY.*)*

JIMMIE. Maybe more comfortable than the one he's *likely* to get.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Crossing to door* R.*)* If he 'as any more jewels in 'is pockets, I think 'e'll sleep much better without them. *(Exits door* R.*)*

MISS WOOFERS. *(Goes to the baby carriage)* Real lace!

JIMMIE. Peggy, you come awye! *(Takes her up a little.)* This ayn't no place for you. Run along upstairs and if anybody arsks you any questions, you don't know nothing. Understand? Be careful what you sye. There's going to be some trouble down here, and they ayn't no use of you gettin' into it.

MISS WOOFERS. But I don't want to run upstairs. Hit's so nice and hexcitin' down here.

JIMMIE. *(Crosses to* BILL*)* Ayn't that just like a woman? *(Disgusted.)* If there's anything going on she wants to poke 'er nose in it. *(Crosses to* MISS WOOFERS.*)* Will you do as you're told? Go on upstairs and keep your big mouth shut.

MISS WOOFERS. Oh, all right! *(Exit* C. *door* R. *and upstairs.* JIMMIE *closes door, comes down* C. *to baby carriage.)*

BILL. *(Crosses to* JIMMIE*)* Perhaps he'll remember more when he wakes up.

JIMMIE. I 'as my doubts.

BILL. I think we know pretty well where he got them, anyhow.

JIMMIE. Didn't I sye so?

BILL. Yes, you called the turn. I wonder how he escaped the police?

JIMMIE. Oh! Just crazy man's luck! Besides, look how thick the fog was.

(Enter OLD SWEETHEART *door* R. *Closes door.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Look wot I found in 'is boots! *(Displays string of pearls.* JIMMIE *groans.)*

JIMMIE. 'E gave you that, too?

OLD SWEETHEART. 'E's the most kind-'earted gentleman I ever met. *(Puts string of pearls around neck.)*

BILL. He'd give anything away. *(Goes up* L. *to head of table.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Now I've got 'im sleeping so peacefully, I'll 'ave a look at the little dear. *(Crosses to perambulator.)*

JIMMIE. *(Sits on table, bitterly)* "Little dear"—'E ayn't even worryin'!

BILL. *(Gravely)* There are those that *are!*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(To baby, frivolously)* Goo-goo!

JIMMIE. Aw! Shut up!

OLD SWEETHEART. Don't you love bybies, Jimmie?

JIMMIE. No.

OLD SWEETHEART. You was such a sweet baby yourself. Give me a nice fat baby and a bottle of gin, and I'm 'appy! *(Looks at baby.)* 'Ow I shall love it! *(Takes baby out of carriage.)*

JIMMIE. She talks as if she was goin' to keep it too.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Tranquilly)* Why not?

JIMMIE. Wot about the *real* mother?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Calmly)* Oh! She can get 'erself some more! Goo-goo! Goo-goo! *(Bus. with baby.* OLD SWEETHEART *looks around startled, then quickly exits down* L. *with baby.* BILL *laughs* L.C. JIMMIE *takes carriage off stage, re-enter* JIMMIE, *closes door* L.*)*

JIMMIE. *(Crosses to* BILL*)* This is no laughing

matter. You know you get a lifer under the English law for kidnappin'.

BILL. Oh, he didn't know what he was doing!

JIMMIE. But we ayn't cryzy. We can't make that excuse.

BILL. What did we have to do with it?

JIMMIE. And we're 'arborin' the kid and the jewels. If they found them 'ere, remember, we'll all go h'up.

BILL. That's right.

JIMMIE. *(Crosses* L. *a little beyond table, looking toward door* L.*)* And another thing. There's another worrying 'erself to death over that kid—and that mother ain't goin' to worry a moment longer if I can 'elp it. *(Crosses to* R. *Sits on table.)*

BILL. *(Crosses to* JIMMIE*)* Yes, we've got to get it back. Fortunately we have the address. Kensington Gardens. What's the matter?

JIMMIE. *(Looks at paper)* 413.

BILL. Well, I'll take it back. *(Starts to door* L.*)*

JIMMIE. *(Stops him)* No; that's my job.

BILL. You'd risk being nabbed.

JIMMIE. To 'ell with the risk!

BILL. It won't do. I owe that much to poor old Spoofy. Besides if I get pinched it won't so much matter. I'm wanted anyway.

JIMMIE. I'll tyke the baby; leave hit at the side door, ring the bell, and scoot like 'ell! If I'm lucky. I'll get awye in the fog! If I'm took, I tells a straight yarn, and throws myself on the mercy of the court. Meanwhile you maykes your get-awye! H'out of the country.

BILL. No, Jimmie, you're clean and I might as well be sent up for this as what I did on the other side.

JIMMIE. No, Bill, you can't take a chance of being nabbed. It ayn't so much for me or yourself or

Spoofy—there's somebody else you've got to think of! That poor little girl upstairs, wot's going to become of her?

BILL. *(Sadly)* Yes—what is going to become of her? *(Crosses to* R. *a little.)*

JIMMIE. *(Crosses to* BILL*)* Inside of jail you couldn't 'elp 'er, but outside, you've both got a chance, it's up to you.

BILL. *(Moved)* But—Jim——

JIMMIE. There's no but about hit. I'm going to tyke care of this kid—*(Indicating door* L.*)*—you tyke care of the other one. *(Goes to* C. *door* R. *Calls)* Miss Gordon. *(*BILL *goes to* R.*)*

ROSE. *(Upstairs)* Yes.

JIMMIE. Come down here a minute, will you? *(Goes down stage to front of table.* ROSE *enters, goes to* JIMMIE. *After closing door,* JIMMIE *to* ROSE.*)* I got something to arsk you and I wants a straight h'answer. Wot did you do with that pyper?

ROSE. Why, I—told—you.

JIMMIE. Never mind wot you told *them.* Hi's arsking you to tell me the truth.

BILL. *(Crosses to* L. *To* ROSE *and* JIM*)* Now, Jimmie, why do you persist——

JIMMIE. *(To* BILL*)* Because I ayn't goin' to see you be given up for no reward. *(To* ROSE.*)* You've read it—'aven't you?

ROSE. *(Pause)* Yes.

JIMMIE. I thought so. Then you know there's a thousand pounds reward out for him, and 'e wanted to give 'imself up so you could get 'arf of it.

ROSE. *(To* JIMMIE*)* Do you think I'd touch any of that reward?

JIMMIE. I know you wouldn't and I told him so. 'E wanted to get hit to you without you knowin' it.

ROSE. *(To* BILL*)* Do you think so little of me?

JIMMIE. Oh, 'e meant well. Now where is that pyper? *(*ROSE *takes paper from her pocket.)*

BILL. Then you had it all the time? *(*ROSE *nods her head "Yes.")*

JIMMIE. Wot are you goin' to do with it? *(*ROSE *tears the paper;* BILL *tries to stop her;* JIMMIE *stops* BILL. *Indicates torn paper.)* May I 'ave them? *(*ROSE *gives them to* JIMMIE. BILL *goes up* R.*)* Whatever 'e's done on the other side, 'e more than made up for—out there. If you two went awye together—well, it might be the best for everybody. *(Crosses to* L.*)*

ROSE. *(Goes to* JIMMIE, *touches shoulder)* It must be wonderful to have a friend like you!

JIMMIE. It's up to you, Miss, to keep 'im out of trouble. Will you? *(Exits* L. *door. Closes door.* ROSE *crosses slowly to door* L., *thinking, turns looking for* BILL, *sees him.)*

ROSE. Bill, who's offering this reward?

BILL. *(Goes to* L. *table)* It's an insurance company in America.

ROSE. Why an insurance company?

BILL. They insured some bonds against theft. They paid the loss—about $60,000. They'll never let up till they get me.

ROSE. I just can't believe that you would—— *(Crosses to table* L., *sits.)*

BILL. Steal?

ROSE. No; you couldn't. *(*ROSE *sits* L. *of table.)*

BILL. A fellow will do a lot of things when he's hard pressed. I'd gotten into an awful mess at school, gambling, debts, I.O.U.'s—I went to Dad's office to make a clean breast of it. He wasn't in; there was some bonds on his desk. I just had to have money so I took them; that night I got drunk. When I woke up, I realized what I'd done. I determined to return the bonds, but I couldn't—they

were gone. Then I saw dad. I told him they were gone. He wouldn't believe me. He was furious. He called on the insurance company for the money for the bonds and told me to face the music. Well, they got out the warrant and I got out of the country, shipped on board a cattle boat for England, and enlisted—then I managed to get myself gassed, but just my luck they brought me around and carted me to a German prison camp. Then I escaped and came back here. That's all. *(Crosses back to table to chair at fireplace.)*

ROSE. *(Rises)* Why didn't you tell me this before?

BILL. *(Goes to* ROSE*)* I never expected to come back, and I wanted you to think of me—well, as a fellow wants the girl he loves to think of him.

ROSE. I told you I'd wait for you.

BILL. Will you still take a chance? I don't ask you to marry the boy that made a fool of himself on the other side—that boy's dead.

ROSE. Billy, I know he is.

BILL. Will you go away with me?

ROSE. Yes; far away—and you'll start all new, and I'll be there to help. *(They embrace. Kiss. Two loud knocks on the door* C. D. R.*)* Who is it?

BRIGGS. *(Off stage)* An officer of the law.

*(*ROSE *looks at* BILL. BILL *stands regarding her.)*

ROSE. *(Gets* BILL *off door* L.*, closes door)* Come in! *(She stands by door. Enter Detective* BRIGGS C. *door* R.*, closes door.)*

BRIGGS. *(At door)* Are you Mrs. Gubbins?

ROSE. No.

BRIGGS. Where is she?

ROSE. She's gone out.

BRIGGS. How soon will she return?

ROSE. I don't know.

BRIGGS. I'll wait for her. *(Looks about the room—coming down a little* R.*)*

ROSE. I'm sorry, but you can't wait here.

BRIGGS. Why not?

ROSE. I'm expecting somebody. Some one on very important business.

BRIGGS. May I ask who you are?

ROSE. I live here.

BRIGGS. I'm from Scotland Yard. I'm looking for an American named Foster, also known as William Jones. The landlady told me I might find him up here. Have you seen him?

ROSE. No.

BRIGGS. You are certain?

ROSE. Yes.

BRIGGS. Would you know him if you saw him?

ROSE. Why?

BRIGGS. That's neither here nor there. The point is, I'm looking for him and if you have any information as to his whereabouts, it may save you trouble if you give it to me now.

ROSE. *(Crossing to* R. *a little)* I have no information to give.

BRIGGS. *(Hangs hat on rack, crossing* R.*)* Very good. In that case, I'll stay here and keep you company for a bit.

ROSE. *(Crossing to* R. *on front of table)* But I tell you, you can't stay here.

BRIGGS. *(Crossing to chair. Moves it into position)* I heard you the first time. *(Sits in chair* R.*)*

ROSE. You have no right to intrude here. *(Crossing to* BRIGGS*—goes to* C.D.*)* Please go. *(Opens door to shut him out.* BENSON *crosses door in the hall.* ROSE *sees him.)* Oh! I see you've brought a friend with you.

BRIGGS. *(Pause)* I suppose you've no objections to my looking about a bit. *(Rises, starts to* D.R.*)*

ROSE. *(Quickly coming down* R.*)* You will have to see Mrs. Gubbins about that.

BRIGGS. *(Crosses to* L.*)* And you don't know when she'll be back?

ROSE. *(Crossing* L. *to* BRIGGS*)* I don't. And I wouldn't be at liberty to show you around.

BRIGGS. My dear young woman, you won't have to *show* me. *(Starts toward* L. *As he does so,* OLD SWEETHEART *enters* D.L. *Closes door. She's wearing all jewels taken from* SPOOFY *and cloak or shawl over them. Crosses to* BRIGGS.*)* Mrs. Gubbins?

OLD SWEETHEART. I beg pardon——

BRIGGS. Are you Mrs. Gubbins?

OLD SWEETHEART. Yes.

BRIGGS. *(To* ROSE*)* I thought you said she was out?

ROSE. *(Confused)* I thought she had gone. She is just going, you see.

BRIGGS. *(As if not quite satisfied)* I called, Mrs. Gubbins, to ask you about an American. (OLD SWEETHEART *involuntarily stiffens.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Cautiously)* An American?

BRIGGS. He enlisted under the name of Jones.

OLD SWEETHEART. Verry common nyme!

BRIGGS. True! But do you happen to know him?

OLD SWEETHEART. 'Ow should I? *(Cautiously)* Why do you want to know?

BRIGGS. I'm from Scotland Yard!

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Gazes at him with strong disfavor)* Oh! From Scotland Yard! Well, I got to go out. *(Starts up stage.)*

BRIGGS. *(Steps up)* The landlady told me——

ROSE. *(Anxiously intervening)* I have already told the gentleman, the American *isn't here. (To* OLD SWEETHEART.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. And quite right! There ayn't

no one here, *with a reward on 'im for Scotland Yard!*

BRIGGS. *(Looking at her)* Who said anything about a reward? I'll take a look about! *(Starts L.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Not in my 'ouse. (ROSE *shows she approves of this stand.)* An Englishman's 'ome is 'is castle!

BRIGGS. *(With a smile)* Quite true! Of course, if you object?

OLD SWEETHEART. I does! I stands up for my rights!

ROSE. *(Quickly)* Quite right, Mrs. Gubbins. (BRIGGS *gives her an angry glance.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. 'As you a search warrant?

BRIGGS. *(Sourly)* I have not.

OLD SWEETHEART. Then that settles it. There's your wye out! *(Points to the door* C.D.R.*)*

BRIGGS. Oh, very well. I suppose you're within your rights. *(Turning up, starts to go.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. I'm very particular wot company I receive! *(Assumes majestic attitude, in doing which shawl comes open and reveals jewels with which she is bedecked.)*

BRIGGS. *(Staring at jewels, coming toward her)* What are these?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Loftily)* Family heirlooms! (ROSE, *too, regards her with surprise.)*

BRIGGS. *(Hesitating)* Cheap imitations, I suppose?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Indignantly)* Who syes they're himitations?

BRIGGS. Aren't they?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Same tone)* Himitations! I should sye not! Indeed!

ROSE. *(Trying to save the situation)* Of course they're imitations.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Indignantly)* There's them wot wears himitations—and them wot wears real—

BRIGGS. *(Taking closer look at diamonds)* Real —oh? Sunburst—set with diamonds—— *(Takes poper from pocket and looks at it, comparing what he reads with the jewels worn by* OLD SWEETHEART*)* Pearl neck—— Here, here! *(Significantly)* Where'd you get them? The truth now! *(Sternly.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. They were given me by a verry kind gentleman.

BRIGGS. When did the kind gentleman give them to you?

OLD SWEETHEART. Only to-dye.

BRIGGS. You'd better take them off!

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Expostulating)* Tyke them off!

BRIGGS. You're going with me!

OLD SWEETHEART. Wot for?

BRIGGS. Oh, you don't know? Where's the baby?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Hiding bottle in dress)* Byby? I don't know what you're talking about.

BRIGGS. How about the bottle?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Showing baby's milk bottle)* That? Oh, that was for gin.

(Baby cries off stage. JIMMIE *ad libs to baby off stage.* BRIGGS *takes pistol from his pocket.* OLD SWEETHEART *to* L. *of table. Enter* JIMMIE. BENSON *enters* C.D.R. *Crosses to table.)*

BRIGGS. Throw up your hands.

JIMMIE. Who are you?

BRIGGS. Scotland Yard! Benson! (BENSON *crosses to* JIMMIE, *searches him, then upstage. To* JIMMIE*)* I've got you covered. I'm taking no chances. You had your nerve to pull off a job like this!

JIMMIE. I didn't pull off no job, Governor.

BRIGGS. Of course not! Those jewels—you're not the kind old gentleman that brought them here? And the baby? I suppose somebody left it on the doorstep and you took it in out of charity.

OLD SWEETHEART. That's right! *(Coming down.)*

BRIGGS. Keep quiet. (OLD SWEETHEART *gets back.)* You didn't expect Scotland Yard to drop in so soon, and, to tell the truth, I didn't expect to fall into anything so gorgeous as this. Now who else is implicated in this affair? *(Looks at* ROSE. *Calls)* Benson! Look in there. *(Indicates door* L.*)*

BENSON. *(Crosses to door* L. *Brings* BILL *out)* Come out here!

(Enter BILL. BENSON *frisks him, then upstage.)*

BRIGGS. *(To* BILL*)* Foster! Foster! *(Looks at* ROSE. ROSE *crosses to* R.*)* Looks like my lucky day. Benson, the police van!

BENSON. Yes, sir. *(Exits* C.D.R. *Leaves door open.)*

BRIGGS. I certainly am glad to see you! *(Crosses to* FOSTER. OLD SWEETHEART *crosses to* ROSE, *starts talking to her, ad lib. Stops in front of chair* R.*)* Shut up! (OLD SWEETHEART *jumps.)* Now listen, all of you! I know you're a bad lot. And I'm not going to take any chances. If anyone makes a move, I'm going to shoot first and inquire afterwards. *(To* OLD SWEETHEART*)* Sit down! *(She does so.)* Take them off. (OLD SWEETHEART *takes off her hat; has diamond tiara underneath.* BRIGGS *startled.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Tyke 'em off?

BRIGGS. Take 'em off! *(To* ROSE*)* Over there,

you! *(Indicating chair* R. *of table.* ROSE *does so. Takes small table by* R. *door and places it in front of* OLD SWEETHEART) Put them there. Hurry up! Hurry up! (OLD SWEETHEART *places them on table one by one. To* JIMMIE, *crossing to* L.) You sit there. *(Indicating chair* L. *of table.* JIMMIE *sits. To* BILL) You there. *(Indicating chair* L. BILL *sits. Turns to* OLD SWEETHEART) All of them. (OLD SWEETHEART *places tiara on table. To* OLD SWEETHEART) Get over there. (OLD SWEETHEART *crosses to* L., *sits in chair* L. *of table occupied by* JIMMIE. *He stands back of chair and turns to others)* Now, while we're waiting for the van, I'd like a little information. *(Enter* SPOOFY L. *furtively.* BRIGGS *does not see him as he is facing the other.* SPOOFY *picks up jewels, puts them into his pocket and exits quietly ond unseen up* C.D.R.) Who put up this job? Who put up this job? Those jewels— *(Turns toward jewels—sees they are gone. He is astonished. Stands and stares at the empty table.)*

CURTAIN

ACT THREE

SCENE: *Same.*
TIME: *Fifteen minutes later.*
DISCOVERED: *Curtain rises on empty stage.* BRIGGS *enters from kitchen, examining rooms. Bus. with table, places it back by door* R.

(BENSON *enters* C.D.R.)

BENSON. *(Coming down)* Can't find anybody who's seen anyone enter or leave the house!

BRIGGS. Damn funny! Where were you?

BENSON. I was telephoning for the van.

BRIGGS. She put them down right here. *(Points to table where he placed the jewels.)* Disappeared right under my nose! How did it happen? *(Crossing to* L.*)*

BENSON. I can't explain it.

BRIGGS. I'm going to find out if I have to choke it out of them.

BENSON. Yes, sir.

BRIGGS. I can't put the handcuffs on these people and take them down to Scotland Yard and confess that I lost these jewels, after I found them.

BENSON. No, sir——

BRIGGS. I'm going to bluff it out of them. I'll do this on my own. Say nothing about this down at the Yard. Keep the house surrounded and let me know as soon as the police van comes.

"Three Live Ghosts"

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BENSON. Yes, sir. *(Crosses to* C.D.R.*)* Good luck. *(Exits* C.D.R.*—closes door.)*

BRIGGS. Good luck! *(Goes to door* L.*)* Step in here, please. *(Goes back to right of table. Enter* BILL *and* ROSE*, followed by policeman. To* ROSE*)* Sit down there. (ROSE *sits* L. *of table. To* BILLY*)* You there! *(Points to chair* L. BILL *sits.)* Now listen! Kidnapping isn't a popular crime over here. It's more a continental pastime, where you have plenty of room. This island's too small for that sort of thing.

BILL. You accuse us of kidnapping?

BRIGGS. *(To* BILL*)* It was a pretty slick job.

BILL. I don't know anything about it!

BRIGGS. *(To* ROSE*)* Nor you, either?

ROSE. No.

BRIGGS. I suppose not! *(Turning on her roughly)* Where were you last night? I have it from your landlady you weren't in your room all night.

BILL. *(Quickly)* You don't have to answer that. You can wait until your lawyer advises you.

BRIGGS. You know a lot for a kid, don't you? *(To* ROSE*)* You don't *have* to answer. But it will be better for you in the end if you do.

BILL. You haven't anything on her.

BRIGGS. Haven't, eh? She tried to steer me from this crib.

BILL. That was on *my* account. It was I got her into this! Why, man, there isn't a crooked hair on her head. She's on the level.

BRIGGS. Then let her answer my question.

BILL. Refuse to answer, Rose.

ROSE. *(Quietly)* Why should I? I'm not afraid.

BRIGGS. You acknowledge you weren't in your room all night?

ROSE. I do.

BRIGGS. Where were you?—I want all your movements.

ROSE. I went out to sell a china bowl.

BRIGGS. Stolen property?

BILL. *(Rising)* See here—you treat her with respect.

BRIGGS. *(To* BILL*)* Sit down. *(To* ROSE*)* So you went out to sell a china bowl?

ROSE. One I had painted.

BRIGGS. Well, did you sell it?

ROSE. I didn't. It fell and broke.

BRIGGS. And after you broke it, what did you do? Keep an appointment with *him* somewhere? *(Indicating* BILL.*)*

BILL. No! *(Nasty tone.)*

BRIGGS. *(To* BILL*)* Any more sounds like that from you, and out you go! I'm trying to be nice to you kids.

ROSE. I had an appointment with him.

BRIGGS. *(To* ROSE*)* What? You didn't meet him anywhere last night? *(Indicates* BILL*)* Near Kensington Gardens, perhaps?

ROSE. I did not.

BRIGGS. You were not in the neighborhood of Kensington Gardens, then, last night?

ROSE. *(Unexpectedly)* I *was.* (BILL *shows great surprise.)*

BRIGGS. Near the house that was entered?

ROSE. Yes.

BRIGGS. At what time was this?

ROSE. *(Pause)* I don't know the time; but I was there *when* it happened..

BILL. *(In consternation)* Rose—you don't know what you are saying!

BRIGGS. Keep still! *(To* ROSE*)* What were you doing there?

ROSE. I followed someone there.

BRIGGS. Followed?

ROSE. Yes—you see, he was suffering from shell-shock.

BRIGGS. You followed a man suffering from shell-shock? How did you come to follow him?

ROSE. I met him in the fog. I remembered having seen him before. He almost got run over. I saw he wasn't himself. I was sorry. You see, I helped at nursing during the war and I knew something was wrong. Besides, I was restless myself.

BRIGGS. *(Incredulously)* Go on!

ROSE. We walked and walked. And then he just seemed to disappear in the fog. I couldn't imagine what had become of him. I waited. Then lights began to flash in the house. The police came and then I left.

BRIGGS. You didn't wait to tip off the danger-signals?

ROSE. *(Wearily)* You don't seem to understand.

BRIGGS. No, I don't. Well, what did you do then?

ROSE. I hardly know. Just kept on going, I guess. I found myself in the neighborhood of a friend of mine. A girl I had known for some time.

BRIGGS. Yes——

ROSE. I went to her room. I was tired—my clothes were soaked. Oh, you believe me, don't you?

BRIGGS. *Yes I do!* (ROSE *bows her head on table. Shaking head)* So you're trying to frame up some mysterious stranger! With shell-shock! Who is he?

ROSE. I—I—— *(Suddenly)* You have no right to question me. I haven't done anything.

BILL. *(Excitedly, rising)* It's outrageous! I won't stand for it!

BRIGGS. *(Calmly)* Oh, you won't stand for it,

eh? You better come across with what *you* know, if you know what's good for you.

BILL. *(Crossing to* ROSE*)* I don't know anything about this affair. *(Officer moves a little nearer to* BILL.*)*

BRIGGS. *(To* ROSE*)* How long have you two been living together?

ROSE. How dare you——

BILL. You wouldn't dare ask that if you didn't have a gun in your pocket.

BRIGGS. *(To* BILL*)* Are you threatening me?

BILL. She's been telling you the truth and you haven't sense enough to see it. *(To* ROSE*)* Rose, don't answer any more of his questions. He'll only twist and turn everything you say so as to make it look bad for you.

BRIGGS. *(To* ROSE*)* How do you come to be living in this house?

ROSE. I came here hoping possibly he might come here too. I promised to wait for him when he went away, as a soldier. (BRIGGS *looks out front.)* I thought of him every day—and I'm not ashamed to say it—I love him. *(Turns to* BILL.*)*

BILL. Rose! *(Puts arm around her.)*

ROSE. *(To* BILL*)* They may take you away—and we may be separated. But I want you to know that I'll wait again, no matter how long. (BILL *embraces her and kisses her.)*

BRIGGS. *(Turns)* Here, here! Where do you think you are? This is a criminal investigation! *(To Policeman)* Officer, take him away! *(Policeman exits with* BILL *down* L. ROSE *starts to follow.)* No, I want you. (BRIGGS *motions to chair* L. *of table.)* Now see here, young woman, you look to me as if you had sense; but you aren't acting that way. *(Sits at table.)* Shielding a criminal doesn't pay. Take my advice and break away from

crooks. Tell what you know and you'll find me your friend.

ROSE. *(Quietly)* Thank you.

BRIGGS. If you're afraid to talk on account of *him*, you can rely upon Scotland Yard to protect you.

ROSE. I have nothing to say.

BRIGGS. You prefer sharing his fate? Going to jail? *(Coming down a little.)*

ROSE. If I have to. *(Goes toward* BRIGGS.*)*

BRIGGS. But you *don't!* Why stick to a crook?

ROSE. He isn't—*that!*

BRIGGS. *(Savagely)* I've known girls like you stand by their lovers before, and what did they get for it? When their crook friends get out of jail—sugar-plums? *(Ironically)* No, black eyes and curses! That's what the crook's girl comes to.

ROSE. He is not concerned in this crime. But—*(Looking at* BRIGGS *fully)*—if he were, I wouldn't tell you.

BRIGGS. I think I've had enough of your company for now. *(Crosses to* D.L.*)* In here, please. *(Exit* ROSE D.L. BRIGGS *closes door. Looks around puzzled. Looks under table. Wanders over to* C.D.R. *Sees motto over door, "Peace, Perfect Peace." Crosses to* D.R. *Opens it.)* Come in here—you!

(OLD SWEETHEART *enters, crossing to front of chair* R. *She is followed by policeman.* BRIGGS *crosses to* L.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Starts talking outside)* An houtrage, that's wot I calls hit! Prisoner in my own 'ouse! I demand 'is instant removal! *(Points to Policeman)* He may be useful, but 'e ain't ornimental.

BRIGGS. Sit down! You don't seem to realize

the serious position you are in. (OLD SWEETHEART *sits, when told, chair* R.)

OLD SWEETHEART. Oh, don't I? H'all the time I 'as been arsking myself, is this Rooshia, or merry H'England?

BRIGGS. I don't think it's going to be very merry for you, unless you answer my questions.

OLD SWEETHEART. I 'asn't any objections to answering questions, I 'as nothink to conceal.

BRIGGS. First tell me what you know about the jewels disappearing.

OLD SWEETHEART. Wot I know! I like that! Didn't you tyke them from me? *(Indignantly.)* Me —wot 'ad a perfect right to 'em! And then you arsk *me* wot's become of them? Maybe I might 'ave a theory. I 'as 'eard Scotland Yard 'as a way of its own—and that harticles found by Scotland Yard are frequently *lost* by them. And where they're gone to—— *(Looking at* BRIGGS.*)* It ain't for me to sye!

BRIGGS. *(Angrily)* Now look here, perhaps a little *inducement* will make you a less unwilling witness.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Tentatively)* I ham always willin' to listen to a little h'inducements.

BRIGGS. Very good! I am going to give you a chance to turn witness for the crown.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Reflecting)* Witness for the crown! That sounds *like an honor.*

BRIGGS. It will go a great deal easier if you tell the truth.

OLD SWEETHEART. You mean the crown rewards me? *(Smiles.)*

BRIGGS. Yes; you will probably get a lighter sentence.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Breaks smile. Indignantly)* You calls that a reward! It's haction I'll be

bringing against Scotland Yard—for taking the jewels and then losing them.

BRIGGS. Now listen—I've had enough nonsense from you. *Where did you get the jewels?*

OLD SWEETHEART. They were given me by a very kind gentleman.

BRIGGS. A kind gentleman? Who is he?

OLD SWEETHEART. An old admirer! *(Smirks.)*

BRIGGS. What's his name?

OLD SWEETHEART. 'Enry 'Iggins. Wot used to keep company with me, and disappeared and then came back the owner of diamond mines! "Tyke 'em," says 'e, "for auld lang syne. Tyke 'em from a 'eart full of remorse, for 'avin' ran off and deserted you. Tyke 'em," says 'e, "and be 'appy." *(*BRIGGS *gives her hard look, crosses to* L.*)*

BRIGGS. *(Movement to* R.*)* Where is he now?

OLD SWEETHEART. Went awye agyne!

BRIGGS. To get more diamonds?

OLD SWEETHEART. I 'ope so.

BRIGGS. *(Looking at her)* Oh, you do!

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Cautiously)* Of course, 'e might 'ave stolen them, and me a perfectly hinnocent party.

BRIGGS. *(Angrily)* The jewels were here—and you know what become of them.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Suddenly)* I 'as hit! Maybe the *spirits* took 'em.

BRIGGS. *Spirits?*

OLD SWEETHEART. 'Ouse full of them! Sometimes I 'ears *raps. (*BRIGGS *snorts.)* And *taps.* An' I 'ave 'eard footsteps. Come to think of hit it ain't the first time things 'as disappeared.

BRIGGS. *(Angrily)* Yes; and I think I can put my hand on the one that helped them disappear. *(To Policeman.)* Bring in that cockney. *(Policeman exits door* R. *Brings in* JIMMIE. BRIGGS *mo-*

tions to chair L. *of table. Policeman follows* JIMMIE *across stage. Policeman stands back of chair.)* Put him there! (JIMMIE *Bus. of pulling up legs of trousers; he is smoking a cigarette.* BRIGGS *to* JIMMIE.*)* What's your name? *(*JIMMIE *looks at* OLD SWEETHEART *and hesitates.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Rises, desperately)* 'Is name? 'Iggins! *(Sits.)*

BRIGGS. That owned the diamond mines?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Confused)* Yes. *(*JIMMIE *crosses legs extravagantly; very proud.)*

BRIGGS. Rather *young* for an *old* admirer of yours.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Quickly)* Oh, this is *'is* son!

BRIGGS. Hm! His son! No relation of yours?

OLD SWEETHEART. Honly by adoption! Left with me by 'Enry 'Iggins! "Tyke 'im," syes 'e. "My dearest treasure and bring 'im hup as your own," which I 'as done, heducatin' 'im to be a credit to 'is king and country.

BRIGGS. He'll be a credit to his country all right—behind the bars.

JIMMIE. You can't arrest me.

BRIGGS. Can't eh? Why not?

JIMMIE. I'm dead.

BRIGGS. *(Looks at him)* You're what?

JIMMIE. I'm dead. I died more'n a year ago.

BRIGGS. Then why in hell didn't you stay dead?

JIMMIE. I did stay dead! I ain't alive right now.

BRIGGS. Perhaps you'll say I'm dead, too.

OLD SWEETHEART. Never can tell!

BRIGGS. *(To* OLD SWEETHEART*)* Trying to be funny, eh?

JIMMIE. I'm telling you the truth. I'm a ghost.

OLD SWEETHEART. It was the *government* what made a ghost out o' 'im.

BRIGGS. I'm going to make a ghost out of somebody, if I don't find out what become of those jewels. Somebody around here has been trying to make a fool out of me——

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Sweetly)* Tryin——?

BRIGGS. And he's going to be sorry. *(To* JIMMIE.*)* Now look here, young man; you can save yourself a long term at hard labor.

JIMMIE. Wot would be 'ard labor for a ghost.

OLD SWEETHEART. Floatin' gently *hout* of jyle!

BRIGGS. *(Angrily)* That'll be enough of this. *(Turns to policeman.)* You know what we sometimes do when prisoners refuse to talk?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Rises)* Wot are you going to do?

JIMMIE. They ain't going to get a word hout of me.

OLD SWEETHEART. Dont 'art him——

BRIGGS. *(Takes out his watch)* Now I'll just wait five seconds for one of you to start the conversation. *(He counts.)* One—two—three—— *(The door opens up* C. *door* R. *by* BENSON. BOLTON *enters.)*

BOLTON. *(Coming down* C.*)* Hello, Briggs! Have you really got him? *(Starts to shake hands.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. The American? I got 'im. *(Crosses quickly between* BRIGGS *and* BOLTON; *shakes hands with* BOLTON.*)*

BRIGGS. Oh, you have?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(To* BOLTON*)* 'E took 'im away from me. *(Points to* BRIGGS.*)*

BRIGGS. *(To* BOLTON*)* Don't pay any attention to her.

OLD SWEETHEART. This is my 'ouse. I found 'im 'ere and findin's keepin's. *(To* BOLTON.*)* I'll fetch 'im to you. *(Starts to go to door* L. BRIGGS *stops her, shoves her to chair* L., *she sits.)*

BRIGGS. You stay right where you are.

BOLTON. Where is he?

BRIGGS. I'll get him. *(Crosses to door* L. *Opens door.* OLD SWEETHEART *makes motions to* BOLTON *that she caught him, etc.,* BOLTON *crosses to front of table.)* Come in here! *(Calls off stage. Enter* ROSE *followed by* BILL. BRIGGS *goes to* R.C. *back, comes down* R. C.*)*

BOLTON. *(Looking at* BILL*)* Ah! Foster! I recognize you from your picture!

BILL. *(Crosses to* BOLTON, *smiling grimly)* It's been a long chase, eh? *(*ROSE *goes down* L.*)*

BOLTON. I shall say it has.

BILL. Sorry I put you to so much trouble.

BOLTON. Oh, never mind about the trouble!

BILL. I'll give you credit for persistency. That reward has followed me everywhere.

OLD SWEETHEART. Reward! (BRIGGS *gives her a look; she subsides.)*

BILL. I couldn't get away from it. Well, I'm glad it's over. The only thing I feel bad about—— *(Turns to* ROSE. *Takes her hand.)* They're trying to pin something on this little girl; and she had nothing to do with it.

BRIGGS. The Magistrate will decide that.

ROSE. Never mind about me, Bill, I hate to think of you as—— *(Tears come to her eyes and she presses her head against his shoulder.)*

BILL. *(Patting her head)* Oh, I couldn't stalk and dodge any longer. *(To* BOLTON.*)* Well, I'm ready to go back. *(Steps out.)*

BOLTON. Good. *(To* BRIGGS.*)* I'll take him right along with me now.

BRIGGS. Not so easy! He's wanted over here.

BOLTON. *(Stupefied)* What for?

BRIGGS. A little matter of kidnapping and robbery.

BOLTON. He's committed a crime over here, too?

BRIGGS. Rather!

BOLTON. *(Looks surprised at others)* Are these people mixed up in it?

BRIGGS. This is the rest of the gang.

*(*BOLTON *and* BRIGGS *cross little to* R. *Enter* BENSON *with* MISS WOOFERS. *Throws her down* R. *She is terribly frightened.)*

BENSON. The landlady's daughter—seems to know a good deal about the case. She's been talking upstairs. *(Goes down stage.)*

BRIGGS. Very well, I'll question her. *(Waves officer standing back of* JIMMIE'S *chair out* C. *door* R. *To* BOLTON.*)* This may interest you too. *(Goes to* MISS WOOFERS, *looks hard at her then abruptly and sharply.)* What do you know about this case? *(*MISS WOOFERS *starts to speak.)*

JIMMIE. *(Quickly)* Nothin'!

BRIGGS. *(To* JIMMIE*)* You keep still!

JIMMIE. She don't know nothin'!

BRIGGS. Keep still! *(To* MISS WOOFERS.*)* This house belongs to your mother?

MISS WOOFERS. *(Just able to articulate)* Ye—es, sir.

BRIGGS. Used as a *crib* by the gang?

MISS WOOFERS. *(Swallowing)* Ye—es, sir.

BRIGGS. *(Pointing to* JIMMIE *and hurling the question at* MISS WOOFERS*)* You know this man, 'Iggins?

MISS WOOFERS. *(Faintly)* Ye—es, sir.

BRIGGS. It was *he* who cracked the safe?

MISS WOOFERS. Ye—es, sir.

BRIGGS. *(Indicating* OLD SWEETHEART*)* You know this person?

MISS WOOFERS. Ye—es, sir.

BRIGGS. "Old fence"—receiver of stolen property?

MISS WOOFERS. Ye—es, sir.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Turns in chair, puzzled; hard look at* PEG*)* Fence? Me, an old fence?

BRIGGS. *(Pointing to* BILL*)* The American chap—he's the leader of the gang?

MISS WOOFERS. Ye—es, sir.

BRIGGS. International crook?

MISS WOOFERS. Ye—es, sir.

BRIGGS. *(Indicating* ROSE*)* You know this young lady stayed out all night?

MISS WOOFERS. Ye—es, sir.

BRIGGS. Got the child handed to her?

MISS WOOFERS. Ye—es, sir.

BRIGGS. She told you that?

MISS WOOFERS. Ye—es, sir.

ROSE. *(Indignantly)* How dare you?

BRIGGS. You have a distinct recollection of her telling you that?

MISS WOOFERS. Ye—es, sir.

BRIGGS. *(Pats her on the shoulder; then to* BOLTON*)* A very good witness. *(Goes up to* BENSON.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Yes, a 'ell of a witness! *(To* PEG.*)* 'Anging the lot of us!

BRIGGS. *(To* BENSON*)* See if you can find any more like her.

BENSON. Yes, sir. *(Exits* C. *door* R., *closes door.)*

MISS WOOFERS. *(Anxiously)* Oh, Jimmie, 'as I said anything wrong?

JIMMIE. Oh! Bly'me! 'As you said anything wrong! Just "yessed" us all into jail, that's all!

BRIGGS. *(To* BOLTON, *crossing to him)* The moment I saw him I knew he was the leader of the gang. *(Points to* BILL.*)*

BOLTON. *(To* BILL*)* I was in hope that he might have had sense enough to go straight over here.

BILL. *(Vehemently)* I tell you I haven't done anything. I'm innocent.

BRIGGS. Oh! Yes, of course—you're all innocent—aren't you?

ALL. Yes, sir.

BRIGGS. *(Laughs, to* BOLTON*)* What's he wanted for in America?

BOLTON. Oh, a matter of some bonds—about sixty thousand dollars' worth. Isn't there any way I can take him back with me?

BRIGGS. Hardly! You know, we like to keep them with us a long time in jail. *(Looks at* OLD SWEETHEART.*)*

BOLTON. Well, there's nothing more I can do. I'll report to the insurance company. *(To* BILL.*)* Too, bad, young man, you got yourself into this fix.

BILL. What's the difference whether I go to jail here or on the other side?

BOLTON. You could have squared it with the insurance company.

BILL. How?

BOLTON. By paying back the money.

BILL. Where was I to get money?

BOLTON. Who do you think has been advertising and offering a reward for you?

BILL. Why, the insurance company, of course.

BOLTON. Quite true. But your estate is paying for it.

BILL. My estate? What estate could there be for me?

BOLTON. Don't you know?

BILL. No——

BOLTON. Your father's.

BILL. Then he's—— *(*BOLTON *bows his head.* BILL'S *head drops.)*

ROSE. *(Comforting him)* I'm sorry.

BRIGGS. You mean to say he's fallen heir to an estate?

BOLTON. Yes.

OLD SWEETHEART. What a nice thing to fall into.

BOLTON. *(To* BRIGGS*)* May I speak to him alone?

BRIGGS. No, I can't take a chance.

BOLTON. It's in connection with the estate. I'll be responsible for him.

BRIGGS. I don't mind your taking him in there, there's no window, but make it brief.

*(*BILL *and* BOLTON *exit down* L. BRIGGS *to front of table.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Now that 'e's got an estate, I 'opes 'e'll appreciate my keepin' 'im 'ere.

JIMMIE. *(Rises)* You think you've been doing 'im a favor?

OLD SWEETHEART. Certainly. I'm 'is benefactress.

JIMMIE. *(To* BRIGGS*)* Don't pye hany hattention to 'er.

OLD SWEETHEART. And wye not? Was it for myself I was wantin' the reward? I should sye not, I was thinkin' of you and Peg.

JIMMIE. Ain't she generous?

OLD SWEETHEART. *(Warming up)* And the wedding presents you'd be needin'! The grand 'oneymoon! Travellin' in style! Not third class! *(Disdainfully.)* But first! In a compartment, where the conductor tips 'is 'at to you! And when you gets out, the porter 'andles your luggage, you walkin' proudly arter, with your 'eads stuck up. And——

BRIGGS. For God's sake, stop her!

OLD SWEETHEART. *(With dignity)* I 'as stopped.

JIMMIE. *(To* ROSE*)* She ayn't bad 'earted. Only she hytes to see anything get awye from 'er.

BRIGGS. Now listen, all of you. I'm going to give you one last chance. I can't afford to take you down to Scotland Yard and confess those jewels were stolen right under my nose, I've held my job too long.

OLD SWEETHEART. Yes, *too* long.

BRIGGS. Here's what I'll do. The one who'll tell me where those jewels are, can walk out of this room—free! Nobody will stop him, and if he does not make himself too conspicuous, the police will never find him!

JIMMIE. *(Crosses to* BRIGGS*)* You mean, if one of us tells, you'd let him go free?

BRIGGS. He can walk right out of that door and I'll see that there's nobody down stairs to stop him.

JIMMIE. Does that go for 'im? *(Points to the room where* BILL *is.)*

ROSE. He'll never tell. *(Crosses to* JIMMIE.*)*

JIMMIE. But if hi tell, will you let 'im go?

BRIGGS. Why him?

JIMMIE. *(Pause, looks at* ROSE*)* 'E's got somethink to live for.

BRIGGS. All right, it's a bargain.

*(*JIMMIE *and* ROSE *start off for* BILL *to door* L. BENSON *and officer appear in doorway shoving* SPOOFY. *He flings him into chair.* SPOOFY *sits half dazed, his hands on his head.* BENSON *has short policeman's club in his hand. Officer stands* R. OLD SWEETHEART *rises.)*

BENSON. Here's another one. Found him asleep in the cellar. Tried to break away and I tapped him on the head with this. *(Shows club, indicate's* SPOOFY'S *head.)*

JIMMIE. *(Indignantly)* You 'it 'im! *(Makes a threatening move towards* BENSON.*)*

BRIGGS. *(Shoving him back)* Look out!

JIMMIE. 'E's a pal of mine and 'e don't know wot 'e's doin'.

BRIGGS. Oh, he's a pal?

OLD SWEETHEART. And a very kind gentleman.

BRIGGS. The one that gave you the diamonds? Eh? *(*OLD SWEETHEART *doesn't answer.* BRIGGS *to* MISS WOOFERS.*)* Didn't he give her the jewels?

MISS WOOFERS. No, sir.

BRIGGS. *(Sharply to* SPOOFY*)* Stand up! *(*SPOOFY *rises, staggers back as if to fall, hangs on to chair,* BENSON *helps him.)* Search him! *(*BENSON *does so and finds the jewels.* BRIGGS *takes them up stage a little.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. They're mine.

BRIGGS. I got them from the kind gentleman this time. *(To* SPOOFY.*)* How did you steal them out of this room?

SPOOFY. Which room?

BRIGGS. This room.

SPOOFY. I've never been here before.

BRIGGS. Oh, no, they just walked out and handed themselves over to you! Well, they're back again and this time I'll keep them. *(Puts them in his pocket.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. Hif you lose them again hi'll 'old you personally responsible.

BRIGGS. *(Crosses to* BENSON*)* I won't lose them again. Let me know when the van comes.

BENSON. Yes, sir. *(Exits* C. *door* R. *and leaves door open.)*

JIMMIE. *(Goes over to* SPOOFY*)* Don't worry, old boy. They can't do anythink to you. You wasn't responsible.

SPOOFY. *(Looking at* JIMMIE*)* Where am I?

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JIMMIE. You're with your pals.

SPOOFY. *(Vaguely)* Pals? Who are these people?

BRIGGS. What? You don't know them?

SPOOFY. *(Puts his hand to his head)* I don't seem to remember. I—I—— *(Collapses.)*

JIMMIE. Look out there! *(Quickly goes to* SPOOFY.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. The kind gentleman's fainted. Hi'll fetch some water. *(Crosses to* L., *enters the kitchen, gets glass of water.)*

BRIGGS. *(Goes up to* SPOOFY, *sees he has collapsed)* Help me get in here.

(BRIGGS, JIMMIE *and* OFFICER *help* SPOOFY *off down* R. MISS WOOFERS *exits with them.* OLD SWEETHEART *comes with water from kitchen.* ROSE *goes to front of table, as they carry* SPOOFY *off.)*

JIMMIE. *(To* BRIGGS*)* It's all your fault, you big bulliphant.

OLD SWEETHEART. *(To* ROSE *crossing to door* R.*)* It's a shyme! 'Itting the poorr gentleman over the 'ead with a club! Mybe it'll make 'im forget 'e myde me a present of the jewels. *(Exits down* R.*)*

*(*ROSE *crosses* L. *to* R. BILL *and* BOLTON *enter door* L. ROSE *crosses* L. *to* BILL.*)*

ROSE. *(Tensely)* They found Spoofy. He's in there. He had the jewels on him.

BILL. What?

BOLTON. *(Crosses to* BILL *and* ROSE*)* You mean they've got one of your gang with the goods on him?

BILL. I tell you there is no gang.

ROSE. *(To* BOLTON*)* Those jewels were taken by a poor fellow suffering from shell-shock.

BOLTON. Shell-shock?

BILL. Yes. He's not responsible. He doesn't know what he's doing. *(Turns to* R. *as if to go.)*

BOLTON. *(Grabs him by the arm)* Are you sure you didn't have a hand in the robbery?

ROSE. Of course not!

BOLTON. If you're telling the truth, you've got a good chance to beat this case.

BILL. Then for heaven's sake, will you stay and help us straighten this thing out?

BOLTON. *(Up stage* L.*)* I'll do anything *I* can.

BILL. *(To* ROSE*)* We've got a chance, Rose—a chance for happiness—and we'll fight this thing through.

ROSE. And we're going to win—because we're right.

(Enter JIMMIE—*door* R.*)*

JIMMIE. *(Crosses to* ROSE *and* BILL*)* Something 'as 'appened to 'is 'ead. 'E's talking sensible. *(Goes up* R.*)*

BILL. *(*ROSE *and* BILL *up* R. *a little)* You mean he's all right now? *(*BOLTON *comes down.)*

JIMMIE. *(Comes down)* Bli'me, no! He's all wrong. Just when he should stye cryzy, damned if 'e don't get 'is brynes back again. *(Up stage* R. *and back.)*

ROSE. *(Crosses to* JIMMIE*)* What do you mean?

JIMMIE. Can't you see the mess 'e'll get us into?

ROSE. In what way?

JIMMIE. Do you think a British jury will believe 'e was cryzy when 'e pinched the jewels, and not cryzy after 'e got 'em? *(Pause.* BILL *turns up stage.)*

BOLTON. *(To* BILL*)* If you aren't mixed up in this thing, you can prove an alibi. Where were you last night?

JIMMIE. Bill and I never left the 'ouse.

BOLTON. *(To* ROSE*)* Were you in the house, too, Miss?

BILL. *(Crosses to* ROSE*)* My George! You told the detective you were in front of the house when the robbery occurred. *(*JIMMIE *crosses to* R.*)*

BOLTON. *(To* ROSE*)* You made an admission as damaging as that?

ROSE. I told him the truth.

BOLTON. Well, to be perfectly frank, it looks mighty strange, and I don't know what to think. *(Crosses to* L. *a little.)*

JIMMIE. And another thing, Bill, when that took came 'ere, Old Sweetheart was wearing the jewels.

BOLTON. Old Sweetheart?

JIMMIE. Oh! That's my step-mother.

BOLTON. *(Crosses to* BILL, *hand on shoulder)* I'm afraid you'll spend a long time there, before you spend any of that money in America.

JIMMIE. Bly'me, 'ere's a mess! What are we goin' to do?

BILL. There's only one thing *to* do. Tell the truth. *(*JIMMIE *goes up stage.)*

BOLTON. Do you think they'll believe you? *(Up stage, crosses to* R., *stays up stage.)*

ROSE. *(To* BILL*)* They must believe you!

(Enter OLD SWEETHEART; *goes to back of chair* R.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. The poor gentleman ayn't in no fit state to be answerin' questions. It's a houtrage. The wye 'e's treatin' 'im.

BRIGGS. *(Enters)* Come on, get in here. Quit your shamming. *(Brings* SPOOFY, *throws him to*

JIMMIE, *who passes him on to* BILL, *who sits him in chair* L. MISS WOOFERS *follows, stays up stage* R. OLD SWEETHEART *goes down* R. *To* JIMMIE) Trying to frame up a new kind of alibi? You claim he was suffering from shell-shock when he robbed the house. Shell-shock, hell! You'll have to think up a better one than that. *(By this time all, except* BRIGGS, OLD SWEETHEART, JIMMIE *and* MISS WOOFERS *are grouped together over at* L.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. I wants a lawyer!

BRIGGS. Better get a good lawyer!

(Enter BENSON C. *door* R.*)*

BENSON. This way, my Lady!

(Enter LADY LEICESTER. *Comes down* R. JIMMIE *crosses to* L. BENSON *exits, leaves door open.)*

BRIGGS. *(Moves chair up* R.*)* Thank you for coming, Lady Leicester. I sent for you to be sure I wasn't making any mistake.

LADY LEICESTER. Thank you for returning my baby so soon. I am very grateful.

BRIGGS. *(As he takes jewels from his pocket.)* I sent the child as soon as I found him. *(Holds out jewels.)* Does your ladyship recognize them?

LADY LEICESTER. Yes. *(*BRIGGS *gives her jewels, she puts them in bag.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. I was tykin' very good care of them for your ladyship.

LADY LEICESTER. Thank you very much.

BRIGGS. Don't thank her. Will you please look at these people and tell me if you've ever seen any one of them before? *(*LADY LEICESTER *looks down the line—gives a start as she sees* SPOOFY. *Stops.)*

LADY LEICESTER. Why—they reported you—dead!

SPOOFY. Dead——?

LADY LEICESTER. *(Crosses to* SPOOFY, *quickly)* But you're not—you're not! Where have you been? What happened? How did you get here?

SPOOFY. *(Rises)* How did I get here?

JIMMIE. *(Goes toward* SPOOFY*)* We brought you 'ere—don't you remember? Took you out of the prison camp.

BILL. *(Coming down)* Spoofy—don't you know us? Spoofy!

SPOOFY. *(Still trying hard to remember)* Prison camp——? *(Recollection begins to return.)* Yes—I remember—we went over the top—I fell—then the prison camp. Why, you were there—— *(Points to* JIMMIE.*)*

JIMMIE. He knows me!

SPOOFY. And you were there! *(Points to* BILL.*)*

BILL. Yes, we were there long before you.

SPOOFY. We escaped—you chaps helped—saved me! Why, I remember. (LADY LEICESTER *moves towards him. He slowly goes towards her and takes her in his arms.)*

OLD SWEETHEART. They do seem to know each other!

JIMMIE. Very well, I should sye.

SPOOFY. Jimmie—Bill! *(Takes their hands.* MISS WOOFERS *crosses to* JIMMIE.*)*

BRIGGS. *(To audience and all in general)* Well, this is a new one on me! Robbed his own safe—and took his old child out for an airing. *(*BOLTON *laughs.)* Come on, Bolton. I want to get out of here. *(Getting hat from rack.)* We'll fix up that reward.

OLD SWEETHEART. I clymes it! *(Crosses to* BRIGGS *and* BOLTON.*)*

BOLTON. We'll thrash that out later on. *(Exit* BOLTON C. *door* R.*)*

OLD SWEETHEART. We'll thrash it out now! *(Shoots this at* BOLTON *as he exits.)*

BRIGGS. I've thrashed out quite enough for one day. We'll divide that thousand pounds—'alf and 'alf.

OLD SWEETHEART. Send *my* six 'undred in the morning.

BRIGGS. Six!

CURTAIN

TWEEDLES

Comedy in 3 acts, by Booth Tarkington and Harry Leon Wilson. 5 males, 4 females. 1 interior. Costumes, modern. Plays 2½ hours.

Julian, scion of the blue-blooded Castleburys, falls in love with Winsora Tweedle, daughter of the oldest family in a Maine village. The Tweedles esteem the name because it has been rooted in the community for 200 years, and they look down on "summer people" with the vigor that only "summer boarder" communities know.

The Castleburys are aghast at the possibility of a match, and call on the Tweedles to urge how impossible such an alliance would be. Mr. Castlebury laboriously explains the barrier of social caste, and the elder Tweedle takes it that these unimportant summer folk are terrified at the social eminence of the Tweedles.

Tweedle generously agrees to co-operate with the Castleburys to prevent the match. But Winsora brings her father to realize that in reality the Castleburys look upon them as inferiors. The old man is infuriated, and threatens vengeance, but is checkmated when Julian unearths a number of family skeletons and argues that father isn't a Tweedle, since the blood has been so diluted that little remains. Also, Winsora takes the matter into her own hands and outfaces the old man. So the youngsters go forth triumphant. "Tweedles" is Booth Tarkington at his best. **(Royalty, twenty-five dollars.)** **Price, 75 Cents.**

JUST SUPPOSE

A whimsical comedy in 3 acts, by A. E. Thomas, author of "Her Husband's Wife," "Come Out of the Kitchen," etc. 6 males, 2 females. 1 interior, 1 exterior. Costumes, modern. Plays 2¼ hours.

It was rumored that during his last visit the Prince of Wales appeared for a brief spell under an assumed name somewhere in Virginia. It is on this story that A. E. Thomas based "Just Suppose." The theme is handled in an original manner. Linda Lee Stafford meets one George Shipley (in reality is the Prince of Wales). It is a case of love at first sight, but, alas, princes cannot select their mates and thereby hangs a tale which Mr. Thomas has woven with infinite charm. The atmosphere of the South with its chivalry dominates the story, touching in its sentiment and lightened here and there with delightful comedy. "Just Suppose" scored a big hit at the Henry Miller Theatre, New York, with Patricia Collinge. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.)
Price, 75 Cents.

MRS. WIGGS OF THE CABBAGE PATCH

Dramatization in 3 acts, by Anne Crawford Flexner from the novel by Alice Hegan Rice. 15 males, 11 females. 1 interior, 1 exterior. Costumes modern and rustic. Plays a full evening.

A capital dramatization of the ever-beloved Mrs. Wiggs and her friends, people who have entered the hearts and minds of a nation. Mrs. Schultz and Lovey Mary, the pessimistic Miss Hazy and the others need no new introduction. Here is characterization, humor, pathos, and what is best and most appealing in modern American life. The amateur acting rights are reserved for the present in all cities and towns where there are stock companies. Royalty will be quoted on application for those cities and towns where it may be presented by amateurs.

Price, 75 Cents.

THE FOUR-FLUSHER

Comedy in 3 acts. By Cæsar Dunn. 8 males, 5 females. 2 interiors. Modern costumes. Plays 2¼ hours.

A comedy of hustling American youth, "The Four-Flusher" is one of those clean and bright plays which reveal the most appealing characteristics of our native types. Here is an amusing story of a young shoe clerk who through cleverness, personality, and plenty of wholesome faith in himself, becomes a millionaire. The play is best described as "breezy." It is full of human touches, and develops a most interesting story. It may be whole-heartedly recommended to high schools. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.)

Price, 75 Cents.

PALS FIRST

Comedy in a prologue and 3 acts. By Lee Wilson Dodd. 8 males, 3 females. 1 interior, 1 exterior. Modern costumes. Plays 2½ hours.

Based on the successful novel of the same name by F. P. Elliott, "Pals First" is a decidedly picturesque mystery play. Danny and the Dominie, a pair of tramps, enter a mansion and persuade the servants and friends that they belong there. They are not altogether wrong, though it requires the intervention of a judge, two detectives, a villain and an attractive girl to untangle the complications. A most ingenious play, well adapted to performance by high schools and colleges. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.)

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Farce in 3 acts. By Leo Ditrichstein. 7 males, 7 females. Modern costumes. Plays 2¼ hours. 1 interior.

"Are You a Mason?" is one of those delightful farces like "Charley's Aunt" that are always fresh. "A mother and a daughter," says the critic of the New York *Herald*, "had husbands who account for absences from the joint household on frequent evenings, falsely pretending to be Masons. The men do not know each other's duplicity, and each tells his wife of having advanced to leadership in his lodge. The older woman was so well pleased with her husband's supposed distinction in the order that she made him promise to put up the name of a visiting friend for membership. Further perplexity over the principal liar arose when a suitor for his second daughter's hand proved to be a real Mason. . . . To tell the story of the play would require volumes, its complications are so numerous. It is a house of cards. One card wrongly placed and the whole thing would collapse. But it stands, an example of remarkable ingenuity. You wonder at the end of the first act how the fun can be kept up on such a slender foundation. But it continues and grows to the last curtain." One of the most hilariously amusing farces ever written, especially suited to schools and Masonic Lodges. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

KEMPY

A delightful comedy in 3 acts. By J. C. Nugent and Elliott Nugent. 4 males, 4 females. 1 interior throughout. Costumes, modern. Plays 2½ hours.

No wonder "Kempy" has been such a tremendous hit in New York, Chicago—wherever it has played. It snaps with wit and humor of the most delightful kind. It's electric. It's small-town folk perfectly pictured. Full of types of varied sorts, each one done to a turn and served with zestful sauce. An ideal entertainment for amusement purposes. The story is about a high-falutin' daughter who in a fit of pique marries the young plumber-architect, who comes to fix the water pipes, just because he "understands" her, having read her book and having sworn to marry the authoress. But in that story lies all the humor that kept the audience laughing every second of every act. Of course there are lots of ramifications, each of which bears its own brand of laughter-making potentials. But the plot and the story are not the main things. There is, for instance, the work of the company. The fun growing out of this family mixup is lively and clean. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

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